



THE INDEPENDENT

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WEDNESDAY 28 APRIL 1999
BUSINESS REVIEW
THIS WEEK'S TOP
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Serbs show signs of buckling

BY PHIL REEVES,
IMRE KARACS AND
RUPERT CORNWELL

AS TOP Russian and American officials met in Moscow and the refugee crisis on Kosovo's border reached breaking point, Yugoslavia yesterday sent out what could be its most serious feelers yet to end the war, suggesting it might be ready to accept a UN-led international peacekeeping force in the province.

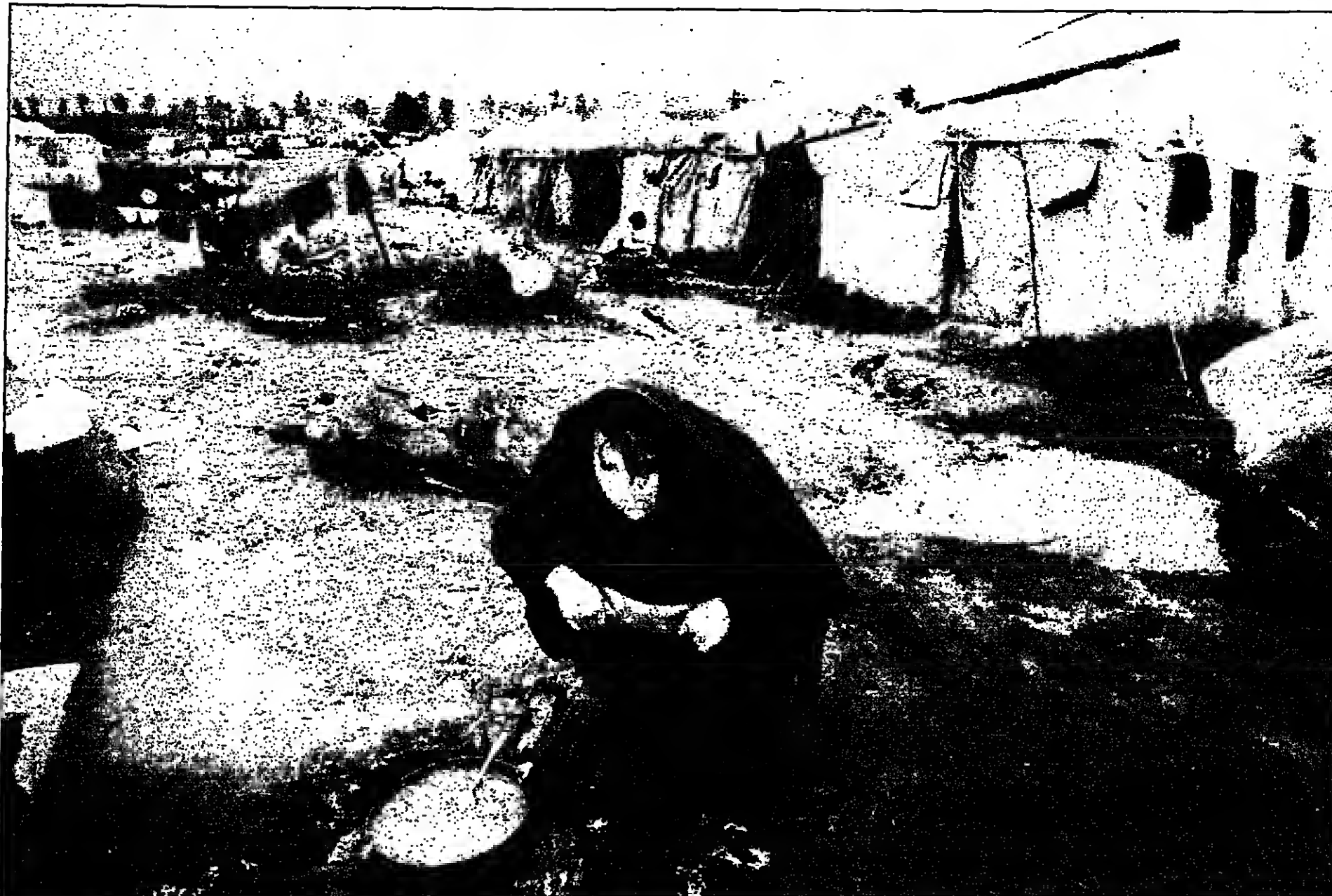
Although the precise status of the offer was unclear, emanating as it did from Vuk Draskovic, the unpredictable Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister, rather than President Slobodan Milosevic himself, allied diplomats last night saw it as evidence that Belgrade might at last be starting to buckle under the pressure of five weeks of increasingly severe bombing.

As if sensing weakness in its opponent, Nato last night vowed an even more ferocious aerial campaign. The attacks so far were "only a fraction" of what was to come, the alliance's supreme commander, General Wesley Clark, warned. As a result of the bombing and an intensifying oil blockade, "step by step, bit by bit, we are cutting off his ability to sustain his forces in Kosovo".

Stepping up the economic and military encirclement of Belgrade, President Bill Clinton last night authorised the call-up of 33,000 reservists, and announced that Washington is preparing a blanket embargo on exports of goods to Yugoslavia.

Nato intensified its action as thousands more refugees arrived in Macedonia, pushing camps way beyond capacity and raising fears among aid officials that disease could sweep the camps. "We are jammed to the breaking point," said Ron Redmont, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. He said that 3,000 Kosovo Albanian refugees arrived yesterday at the Blace crossing, while at least another 1,000 each crossed at Lojane and at Lipkovo.

Speaking at a crowded press conference in Belgrade, Mr Draskovic called on Russia and the West to reach a compromise on the peace force, which would be enshrined in a United Na-



A woman cooking over a campfire at a refugee camp in Kukës, near the Kosovo border in northern Albania, where conditions are 'at breaking point' Tom Pilon

tions resolution. Though he admitted he had not directly discussed the proposal with Mr Milosevic, he said that it had been agreed by the Yugoslav President in talks last week with Russia's special Kosovo envoy, Viktor Chernomyrdin. Whatever his authority, Mr Draskovic's words only underscored how Moscow, to all intents and purposes Belgrade's sole supporter in the conflict, has become the fulcrum of the sudden surge in diplomatic efforts to find a solution. The early signs were that lengthy talks in Moscow be-

tween Strobe Talbott, the US Deputy Secretary of State, Mr Chernomyrdin and the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, did not succeed in generating a breakthrough, beyond ending Moscow's long isolation on the Kosovo issue. There was "no question that Russia and the US are working together on this problem," was all Mr Talbott would say afterwards, describing his discussions as "frank, serious and constructive" - a thinly coded acknowledgement that although the meeting had been valuable, both sides had aired, and failed

to resolve, their differences. Chief among these is Mr Milosevic's insistence, echoing that of Belgrade, that the first step must be a unilateral halt in the Nato bombing and a restarting of negotiations. The West's reply is that there is nothing to negotiate until Mr Milosevic pulls out his forces, allowing a Nato-dominated international peacekeeping force to move in, and almost 700,000 Kosovo Albanian deportees to return home. Without guarantees on that point, there can be no bombing pause. The gap, however, does seem more bridgeable on the make-up of the international

'Nato attacks housing estate'

BY ROBERT FISK
in Belgrade

NATO WAS accused of killing as many as 20 civilians in the southern Serb town of Surdulica yesterday when aircraft reportedly fired four missiles into the centre of a housing estate, destroying dozens of homes and badly damaging a hospital.

Yugoslav government sources said that a "massacre" had occurred at midday when four Nato jets attacked the small textile town 40 miles south-east of the city of Nis.

Later reports said the death toll could rise because much of the centre of Surdulica had been destroyed in the attack.

There was no immediate response from Nato. A senior British officer had earlier reported that Nato had had "a good day" in its air strikes over Yugoslavia, listing an oil refinery and an office block in Belgrade among targets that had been struck.

Serbian state television RTS first reported that Nato air strikes had killed at least five people in the town. Serbian TV, which was bombed again by Nato yesterday morning, said rescue teams were searching for more bodies after the attack.

The Yugoslav news agency, Tanjug, claimed that Nato warplanes had dropped four bombs on the town at mid-day.

The reported killings at Surdulica occurred as Mr Vuk Draskovic, the Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister, suggested in Belgrade that an armed UN force could enter Kosovo with Yugoslav permission under a UN Security Council mandate.

■ Further reports pages 2-4
■ Leading article Review, page 3
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Tears and flowers as the people came to mourn their second 'English Rose'

THE MAN in the black leather jacket looked as tough as they come but as he handed a bunch of flowers to the young police officer, he was too choked to speak. White with grief, he turned on his heel and strode off into the spring sunshine.

The bouquets began arriving at Jill Dando's house in Fulham, west London, soon after news of the television presenter's murder was announced by a stunned BBC colleague on Monday. By yesterday afternoon, there were 40 or 50 of them propped up against the railings of a neighbour's house in Gowan Avenue, the quiet suburban street where she was gunned down like a Mafia boss.

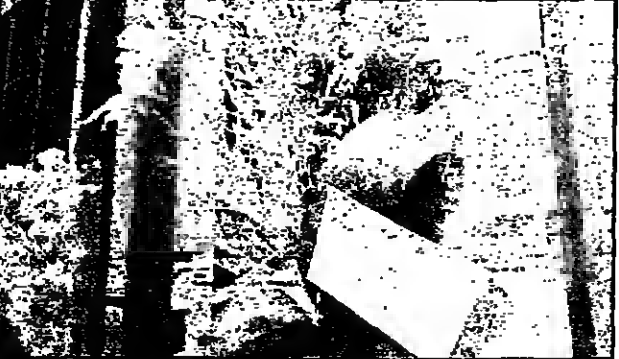
Some of the flowers were from neighbours and friends, but most were from people who knew her only as a reassuring presence in their living rooms, bringing them the news,

BY KATHY MARKS

the latest unsolved crime or a new holiday destination. They had never met Jill Dando, but they mourned her all the same.

Something similar happened 20 months ago. The outpouring of grief is quieter this time. Yet the comparisons are irresistible and were spelt out in a note pinned to a bunch of pink carnations. "We have lost another English Rose," it read.

Ms Dando may not have occupied the same place in the nation's affections as Diana, Princess of Wales, but she was treasured by the viewers of Middle England. And the parallels between the two women are uncanny. Both were blonde, both embodied something quintessentially English and both met a violent death in their thirties, at a time when they had just found love and had every-



Flowers outside BBC headquarters Andrew Buurman

thing to look forward to. The bouquets laid in memory of Ms Dando evoked the vast carpet of flowers that took root a few miles away, outside the gates of Kensington Palace.

And, as if the echoes of that extraordinary late summer of 1997 were not loud enough, people queued up to sign con-

forensic examination. So the floral tributes had to be placed across the road.

Some of the bouquets were accompanied by handwritten messages. "To Jill Dando, in memory of a nation's sweetheart, from Bob, an admirer," read one. "Dear Jill, we only met briefly but I shall never forget your smile," wrote a fan called George. Another note stated, simply: "It's so wrong."

Gowan Avenue and the surrounding streets presented an image of suburban tranquillity yesterday - mothers pushing their babies' pushchairs, bursts of blossom in the trees, the murmur of a radio from inside a house where builders toiled. Not the kind of place where young women are shot in the head on a Monday morning.

The sense of disbelief was palpable among the people who stood in buddies outside the

security cordon, watching the police come and go. "It's so desperately sad, such a waste," said a grey-haired woman in a blazer and plaid skirt.

Scenes of crime officers conducted a fingerprint search of Ms Dando's house and peered over neighbouring rooftops from a hydraulic lift. Police also scoured drains around the area and searched the banks of the River Thames at low tide.

Just before midday, a taxi drew up and the driver got out, clutching a bunch of roses, lilies and freesias. They had been given to him, together with a £20 note, by a scruffily-dressed young man who hailed him outside Victoria Station and told him: "Please, take them to Jill Dando's house."

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THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

Australia	A\$5.00	Ireland	Ir£12.00
Canada	C\$5.00	Italy	L\$3.00
France	Fr£5.00	Japan	Y\$100.00
Germany	DM5.00	Malta	M\$0.65
Greece	Gr£5.00	Netherlands	gld\$5.50
Hong Kong	H\$10.00	Norway	Nkr\$9.00
India	Rs100.00	Portugal	Pt\$2.00
Israel	Sh\$10.00	Spain	Sp\$3.75
Italy	L\$3.00	Sweden	Sw\$2.00
Japan	Y\$100.00	Switzerland	Sfr\$5.00
Malta	M\$0.65	Taiwan	T\$100.00
Netherlands	gld\$5.50	USA	US\$3.50
Norway	Nkr\$9.00		

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WAR IN THE BALKANS

"The Yugoslav leaders want the war to spill over into Macedonia and Albania, therefore what Nato is doing is a necessity out of evil"

Kiro Gligorov,
Macedonia's President

"Russia and the US are working together on this problem ... Our talks were very constructive, serious and frank"

US Deputy Secretary of
State, Strobe Talbott

"The West must approve a compromise on the peace force ... I think President Milosevic is ready to accept a resolution"

Vuk Draskovic, Yugoslavia's
Deputy Prime Minister

"It remains to be seen as to whether he [Vuk Draskovic] will be allowed to continue to tell the truth. It shows the facade of unity is cracking open"

George Robertson

"We are at breaking point. We will be seeing people sleeping in the open. But anything is better than what's in no-man's land"

Ron Redmont, UNHCR
spokesman in Macedonia

"Russia is losing patience with Milosevic ... Russia could be particularly helpful to us in the context of the UN. We want Russia to be part of the solution"

Robin Cook

Apache
crashes
during
training

WEAPONRY

By STEVE BOGGAN
in Tirana

THE MORE powerful and high-tech the weaponry, the more America's enemies rejoice when it goes wrong. So it proved again yesterday when, with the memory of the shooting down of an "invisible" stealth bomber still fresh in people's minds, the US military had yet another piece of wreckage to explain away.

This time, the debris in a field 30 miles north of Rinas Airport in Tirana, the Albanian capital, was from one of the long-awaited AH-64 Apache helicopters recently stationed there.

Much to the enjoyment of the population of neighbouring Serbia, living under the Nato bombardment, the helicopter crashed and burst into flames during a training mission at 10.15pm on Monday. Its two-man crew escaped with only minor injuries.

Fortunately for them, the accident happened during a search and rescue practice mission in the company of a Black Hawk helicopter which was able to scramble a recovery operation.

According to the American



US Army Apache helicopters similar to the one that crashed 30 miles north of Tirana yesterday

military, a Medevac helicopter was with them within seven minutes and, four minutes later they were in the hands of medics at the 212th Medical Army Surgical Hospital - the last of its kind in the US Army. The other Mash units have been replaced by Combat Surgical Units.

Perhaps less fortunately for the Americans, a network television news crew was on board the Black Hawk and it is

understood they filmed the incident, footage which will probably find its way onto Yugoslav television.

Last night, the American military ruled out sabotage and enemy fire as causes of the crash, suggesting it was the result of mechanical failure. The 24 Apaches expected had already been reduced to 23 when one developed engine failure in Italy.

Nevertheless, the Army

was in a positive frame of mind. "We are not going to be wavered by this incident," said Lieutenant Colonel Garrie Dorman. "This is the cost of doing business. We plan to drive on with our mission undeterred."

Each Apache attack helicopter costs \$16m (£10m). Much feared by troops on the ground, the Apache carries Hellfire guided missiles to destroy tanks, armour and

artillery while using non-guided rockets and nose-mounted cannon to wreak havoc among "soft" vehicles and personnel. It distinguished itself during the Gulf War when it fired the first allied shots of Operation Desert Storm, hitting a radar site and creating a blind Iraqi corridor for allied aircraft.

Meanwhile American A-10 "Warthog" tank-killers have been seen circling the skies over Kosovo yesterday for the

first time, in sight of the Albanian border. Several explosions were heard from the Morini border post, 12 miles north-east of Kukes.

At the border station, guards watched as the Warthogs dropped flares to ward off heat-seeking anti-aircraft missiles. No missiles were seen fired at the aircraft, which fly lower and slower than the jet fighters that have carried out most of the Nato missions so far.

Campbell
helps put
the spin
into Nato

MEDIA WAR

By STEPHEN CASTLE in Brussels

SIX BRITISH officials have been seconded to Brussels to staff a new unit designed to manage Nato's faltering media operation along the lines of successful election campaigns in Britain and America.

The move was seen as evidence of fears within Nato that it is losing the propaganda war. "It shows they have anxieties about the way that the propaganda war is going," said one critic of the bombing.

There have been a series of propaganda blows to Nato, including the mistaken attack on the refugee convoy in Kosovo, splits in Nato over the bombing of broadcasting stations in Serbia, dissent over the oil embargo, and above all, lack of coherence about Nato's policy on ground troops.

The group, operating from two meeting rooms inside Nato's headquarters in Brussels, is designed to relieve the pressure on Jamie Shea, the alliance's over-worked press spokesman, and modernise his communications operation.

Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's press secretary, will spend most of this week in Brussels, and at Shape (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe), the alliance's military headquarters in Mons, 50km south of the Belgian capital.

Mr Campbell was partly responsible for raising the expectations that Nato would endorse the use of ground troops, but the subject was carefully kept off the agenda at the Nato summit by the Americans. The Prime Minister also went to Washington with headlines suggesting that he was giving a lead to Nato, but having set the tone, he avoided holding any press conferences at the summit, leaving it to Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence, to answer questions about Britain's role.

There is no doubt, however, that Mr Campbell is leading the behind-the-scenes co-ordination of a tougher, more aggressive media strategy against Serbian propaganda from the Nato headquarters. He is deeply respected by Bill Clinton, who once joked that he wanted him on his White House staff, and was responsible after the bombing of the refugee convoy for co-ordinating Nato leaders in blaming the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, for all killings in Kosovo, deflecting the blame from Nato.

Mr Campbell was the first to signal that last week's offer by Mr Milosevic was unacceptable, when Mr Clinton was still saying it was a "step forward", and he has been the most robust in defending the bombing of the broadcasting stations as "legitimate military targets", playing down the anxieties of the Italians.

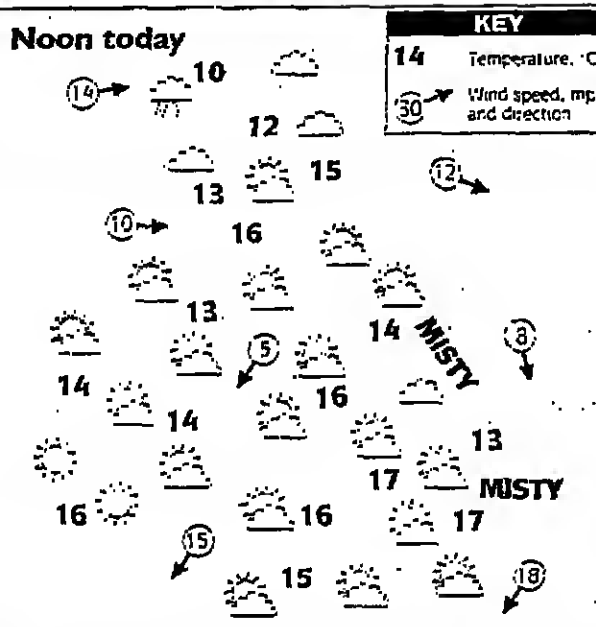
His task is to set up a unit which will provide all the functions now expected by political parties when they fight campaigns: a daily newspaper cuttings service and wider media monitoring, preparation of "lines to take" for press officers, creation of "story lines" for daily briefings, quick rebuttal of news from Belgrade, and stronger liaison between Nato, Shape and the alliance's major national capitals.

Mr Campbell, who spent yesterday in Brussels in meetings with the new staff, now has six Foreign Office and Downing Street personnel in place, including one aide from the Number 10 press office. However he is said to be treading carefully, aware of the danger of being seen to dictate to Mr Shea. Washington, meanwhile, has seconded three staff, including Jonathan Prince, a White House speech-writer, and both Bonn and Paris are expected to augment the team, although their staff had not arrived yesterday.

BRIEFING: DAY 35

- The Foreign Office has provided £100,000 funding to restart the Albanian-language newspaper, *Koto Ditore*.
- Over 300 British troops have arrived in the Greek port city of Salonica to reinforce Nato troops stationed in Macedonia. British military vehicles arrived on board a ship carrying 30 containers of military equipment.
- A total of 1,800 British troops are expected in Macedonia in the next few days, the majority flying directly to the capital, Skopje.
- Japan will give an additional \$20.4m (£12.75m) in emergency aid to help ethnic Albanian refugees.
- The Czech government says three planes will be sent to Macedonia to transport Kosovo Albanians to the Czech Republic.
- Finland has received its first Kosovo refugees (160).
- The Rev Jesse Jackson is leading a 20-member delegation of US religious leaders to Yugoslavia, hoping to secure the release of three American soldiers and provide Milosevic with "an honourable way" to resume peace negotiations. The delegation will include rabbis, Muslim clerics and Serbian-American religious leaders.
- Kuwait Television has raised \$7m (£4.3m) for refugees in an all-day drive to help fellow Muslims.

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation: Scotland will be cloudy but there will only be some light rain or drizzle in the far north and across the Northern Isles, with patches of hill and coastal mist or fog. Most places will be dry, and the more southern parts of Scotland will see some sun. England, Wales and Northern Ireland will all have a mostly fine day with sunny spells once any early mist or fog patches have lifted. However, some eastern coasts of England may stay misty for longer.

London, SE, East S & SW England: Mist or fog patches lifting to leave spells of sunshine. Breezy, especially at the coast. A moderate to fresh north-easterly wind. Max temp 15-18C (59-64F).

Channel Is: Windy but dry with occasional sunshine. Fresh north-east wind. Max temp 14C (57F).

E Anglia, E & NE England: Cool and misty near the coast, brighter elsewhere. Moderate north-easterly winds. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F), cooler on the coast.

Wales, Midlands, East N & NW England, Lake Dist: Isle of Man: Any fog patches lifting to leave some sunshine. Light or moderate north-easterly winds. Max temp 15-18C (59-64F).

N Ireland: Fog patches going to leave it dry with long sunny spells. Light winds, mostly from north-westerly. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F).

SW & SE Scotland, Glasgow, Edinburgh: Early fog patches lifting to leave it dry with some sunshine but cloudier later. Light winds, mainly north-westerly. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F).

NW & NE Scotland, Aberdeen, W Isles, N Isles: Bright for a while in many places but cloud increasing to bring rain to the more northern areas. Light north-west winds backing moderate westerly. Max temp 11-14C (52-57F).

OUTLOOK

Cloud will spread southwards across Scotland and into Northern Ireland, Wales and northern England tomorrow but rain will die away. Southern areas will have sunny breaks, with showers arriving overnight. It will be wet in Scotland and Northern Ireland on Friday, with little change elsewhere.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Bypass (A50) and Shadow Road roundabout, East of Alton, Contrailow for work on new A50. Until 15th October. Northumberland: A1 Between Morpeth (A138) and Alnwick (A1068). Long-term roadworks at Felton, with a 40mph speed limit. Until 12th September. Norfolk: A12 Gorleston-on-Sea (A143). Roadworks. Until 3rd August. A1 Roadworks. Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

LIGHTING UP

Refugee	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
Belfast	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
Birmingham	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
Bristol	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
Glasgow	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
London	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
Manchester	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm
Newcastle	8.5pm to 9.5pm	9.5pm to 10.5pm

HIGH TIDES

Location	4M	HT	PM	HT
Amurmouth	6.45	12.4	7.14	12.5
Cardiff	5.11	4.2	5.27	4.2
Devonport	5.27	5.1	5.51	5.1
Dover	10.52	6.1	11.03	6.3
Dun Laoghaire	11.26	4.0	11.48	3.8
Falmouth	4.55	4.9	5.27	4.9
Greenwich	12.10	3.1	12.53	3.1
Harwich	11.37	3.8	11.53	3.8
Heathfield	10.07	4.2	10.30	4.2
Hull (Albert Dk)	6.06	7.9	6.12	8.2
Kings Lynn	6.02	8.1	6.06	8.2
Leith	2.18	5.1	2.37	5.1
Liverpool	10.59	8.8	11.20	8.9
Milford Haven	5.51	6.4	6.12	6.4
Newquay	4.49	6.4	5.05	6.4
Portsmouth	6.01	1.2	6.37	1.2
Purcell	11.00	4.2	11.21	4.4
Pwllheli	7.49	4.4	8.09	4.5
Scarborough	3.51	5.2	3.59	5.3
Wick	11.53	1.1	11.50	1.1

AIR QUALITY

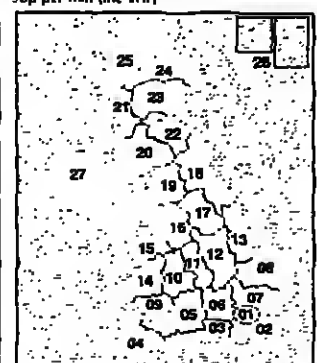
Location	NO ₂	SO ₂
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
E England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 05.39	Sun sets: 20.18
Moon rises: 17.59	Moon sets: 05.19
Full Moon: April 30th	

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts call 0800 5 5999 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).



YESTERDAY

Location	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Belfast	10.5	15	12
Birmingham	11.5	15	12
Bristol	11.5	15	12
Glasgow	11.5	15	12
London	11.5	15	12
Manchester	11.5	15	12
Newcastle	11.5	15	12

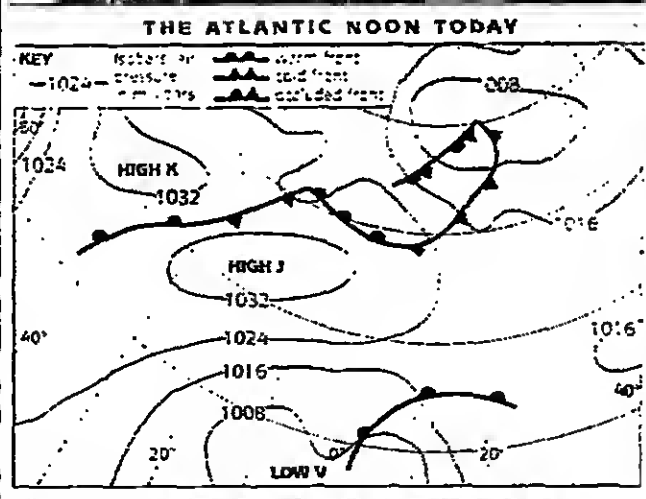
EXTREMES

Location	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Belfast	10.5	15	12
Birmingham	11.5	15	12
Bristol	11.5	15	12
Glasgow	11.5	15	12
London	11.5	15	12
Manchester	11.5	15	12
Newcastle	11.5	15	12

RAIN OR SHINE...

THE WORST drought in Chile this century is forcing major cities to endure three-hour nightly power cuts because the lack of water has crippled the hydroelectric power grid. The rationing has outraged both businesses and residents and left the capital, Santiago, virtually gridlocked when power is cut to the traffic light system. In a normal year, water generates about 80 per cent of Chile's energy.

THE WORLD



Location	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Belfast	10.5	15	12
Birmingham	11.5	15	12
Bristol	11.5	15	12
Glasgow	11.5	15	12
London	11.5	15	12
Manchester	11.5	15	12
Newcastle	11.5	15	12

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Alfriston, East Sussex	£47	The Barford Bridge, Wiltshire	£42	The Dart Marina, Devon	£57	The Black Swan, Dorset	£44	The Royal Salubrious, Wiltshire	£57	The Swan's Nest, Wiltshire	£48	Ullswater, Cumbria	£68
The Surr Inn, Essex	£49	Brands Hatch, Surrey	£37	The White Horse, Dorset	£47	The Green Dragon, Dorset	£44	The White Hart, Dorset	£53	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
Amersham, Bucks	£49	Cambridge, Surrey	£45	The Peveril of the Peak, Derbyshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
The Crown, Essex	£49	Frimley Hall, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
Acorn, Berkshire	£49	Hampton, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
The Berrys, Surrey	£49	Hampton, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
Bashbury, Oxfordshire	£42	The Chaucer, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
Wharfedale, Yorkshire	£42	Chesham, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
Bath, Avon	£60	Chesham, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
Bath Spa, Avon	£60	Chesham, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52
The Bath Spa, Avon	£60	Chesham, Surrey	£45	Dunstable, Bedfordshire	£47	The White Horse, Dorset	£44	The White Horse, Dorset	£53	The White Horse, Dorset	£52	Wincanton, Hampshire	£52

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It's spring in Belgrade, so could the first signs of a truce be in the air?



ROBERT FISK
IN BELGRADE

Is it the beginning of the end? In the spring sunshine in Kneza Mihaila street yesterday, it felt like it. The coffee shops were packed and a small crowd had gathered outside the headquarters of Yugoslavia's Deputy Prime Minister, Vuk Draskovic, who had been talking of a return of Kosovo Albanian refugees, of UN resolutions and UN forces, and long conversations with Mr Gazprom himself, the Russian envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin.

The morning papers were touting the Moscow visit of the American diplomat Strobe Talbott. Even Nato had spent its 34th night over Belgrade bombing an office block it had already destroyed; which was a bit like trying to set light to an old bonfire.

Wars tend to end when each side can drag something for itself out of the embers. And peace in the Balkans now - with UN troops in Kosovo - would present rewards to all involved. Nato could abandon a ferocious five-week air bombardment that has not saved a single Kosovo Albanian - and at the same time avoid a bloody ground war.

The Yugoslavs could save their remaining infrastructure while claiming, correctly, that only their refusal to submit to Nato's ultimatum prevented Nato troops entering Kosovo. The Russians would be brought back into international peace-making as mediators and as an ally in the UN Security Council.

The United Nations - the old, bankrupt donkey to which America always turns when it runs into trouble - would hobble in to take over the mess (with Nato claiming, of course, that the donkey could never have hobbled into Kosovo without alliance "resolve").



Vuk Draskovic, Yugoslavia's Deputy Prime Minister, speaking at yesterday's press conference

Albania and Macedonia would be happy to see the back of the tens of thousands of destitute Kosovo refugees, who would go home under the "protection" of UN troops, who might be armed and who might include troops from Nato countries. There would be no independence for Kosovo, but there might - if Mr Draskovic is to be believed - be considerable autonomy. The KLA would have to lay down its guns; it wouldn't be the first ethnic minority guerrilla army to be betrayed by Washington.

Mr Draskovic claimed yesterday that the composition and mandate of a UN force was the only area of disagreement ("1 or 2 per cent") between himself and President Slobodan Milosevic. The President says Nato troops cannot be part of a UN troop commitment; Mr Draskovic says the UN Security Council would have to decide.

In reality, it is not difficult to see how an acceptable mixture of nations might be included in a peacekeeping army. Yugoslavia's old Orthodox ally Greece, and Italy - which has

maintained good relations with Yugoslavia throughout the war - might provide Nato contingents. Russia could send troops (Washington has already agreed to this), while neutral EU nations with UN experience - Sweden and Ireland, for example - might be invited to join the force; along, perhaps, with India, the nation which helped to form the non-aligned movement with Yugoslavia.

But these are early days and Vuk Draskovic is not the President of Yugoslavia, even if one sometimes gets the im-

pression he would like to be. It was only 12 hours since the very tired and emotional leader of the Serbian Renewal Party turned up at the Hyatt Hotel to announce that the Yugoslav army was occupying the pro-Draskovic Studio-B television station; yesterday, Mr Draskovic agreed that the only soldier to turn up had left after half an hour and was welcome to take coffee with him in a downtown restaurant.

In other words, Mr Draskovic - a fierce opponent of Mr Milosevic until he was seduced

into the President's coalition government - is the sort of chap whose words should be taken with a very large pinch of salt. In 1991, when he was addressing crowds from the balcony of the Belgrade National Theatre, Mr Draskovic earned the nickname of *Golub* - Serbian for pigeon - because, in the words of one of his former supporters, "pigeons sit on balconies and shit about".

But Mr Draskovic's performance yesterday - a qualified repeat of his Monday night interview on Studio-B but this

time in English and in front of scores of Serb and foreign journalists - was impressive. Although he had not spoken to Mr Milosevic for two days, Mr Draskovic said he had held a long private conversation with Mr Chernomyrdin only a few hours earlier - the Russian Balkan envoy was preparing to meet Mr Talbott - and that Mr Milosevic was in any case "ready and must be ready to accept resolutions of the Security Council of the United Nations". The composition of a UN force for Kosovo would be

up to the Security Council. "The UN (would) serve in Kosovo under the flag of the UN and under the mandate of the UN Security Council," he said. "This means we are very close to compromise. Who will do what first is not a crucial point - will Nato stop its aggression before our state forces start their withdrawal from Kosovo, or will our state forces commence their withdrawal and [then] Nato stops? The best thing is that both sides do this at the same moment with the full approval of the Security Council ... In the UN flag, we can recognise our own national flag. In the UN flag, we can recognise our own state's security. Often in the past Serb soldiers, under the flag of the United Nations, participated in peacekeeping missions in many parts of the world."

So the UN, it seems, are the good guys again in the Balkans. And Mr Kofi Annan - much condemned by the Yugoslav foreign ministry in the early days of the war as an American mouthpiece - is on the way to Moscow and may even (though Mr Draskovic didn't say so) be invited to Belgrade. There must be an "urgent" Security Council resolution on Kosovo "which both sides, Nato and Yugoslavia, must respect".

Then - suddenly - Mr Draskovic's words needed a pinch of salt; indeed, a whole ton of the stuff should have been carted into his party offices. The Serbs were enduring the same suffering as the Jews under the Nazis, we were told. Serbia was proud to be compared to the Jews. "Every day, Serbia is closer to Hiroshima."

We gritted our teeth - did we hear a pigeon fluttering up there at the front of the room? The 500 Yugoslav dead of the NATO bombardment - or the 400 death toll which the Yugoslav Minister of Health, Dr Legosava Milicevic, confirmed to us a few hours later - very definitely does not compare to the murder of six million Jews. Nor to the quarter of a million Japanese who died at Hiroshima (although on this occasion Mr Draskovic had at least recognised that the United States bombed both Japan and Yugoslavia).

Nato seeks right to board ships which are suspected of breaking oil embargo

NATO WILL today debate plans to escalate its stranglehold on Serbia by allowing military commanders to board Russian ships suspected of supplying oil to the Belgrade government, and to bomb a fuel pipeline inside Montenegro.

As the alliance delivered a more cautious estimate of the quantity of oil remaining at the disposal of the Serbian military, Nato's supreme allied commander, General Wesley Clark, pressed for tough new rules of engagement which would allow the search of vessels arriving in Montenegro.

That plan, along with a separate study on the possible bombardment of a pipeline inside Montenegro, will be debated by Nato's political chiefs at a meeting of the North

Atlantic Council today. If given the go ahead, the stop and search regime could bring the alliance into conflict with Russia which has said it will ignore the oil embargo.

However the alliance's concern over the quantity of oil still arriving in Serbia was underlined by an assessment from General Clark that 10 ships are arriving each day at the port of Bar, and unloading 24 hours a day. That compares with the two or three vessels which were docked at the Montenegrin port before the air bombardment.

Although Montenegro is a part of the Yugoslav republic, it has stayed out of the conflict and Nato has been unwilling to make it a military target.

The alliance, which has previously claimed to have de-

FUEL BLOCKADE

By STEPHEN CASTLE in Brussels

stroyed 70 per cent of Belgrade's refining capacity, yesterday produced a different and less impressive statistic, claiming that 33 per cent of Serbia's military oil reserves had been eliminated.

With the concentration on the need to block off more oil, General Clark said "any visit and search regime has, of course, to have appropriate rules of engagement to be able to use the threat of force". He added that "if it is approved [by the Nato ambassadors] the officers dealing with the merchant ships will give them appropriate instructions."

The alliance hopes that mer-

chant ships will contact them to seek clearance for cargoes sailing into the area. But a Nato source suggested that, under international law, Nato naval commanders would be allowed to board and search all vessels, including Russian ones, and - if they were found to be carrying oil - warships would be able to escort them to port.

With a new point of conflict with Moscow looming, there was added gloom within the alliance at the lack of progress on the diplomatic track during talks held by the US envoy, Strobe Talbott, in Moscow.

The former Russian prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin,

said that Belgrade had agreed to an "international presence" in Kosovo with Russia's participation, but he acknowledged that such a group, which would be only lightly armed, was well short of Nato's demands. "Nato thinks that primarily its forces will participate [in Kosovo]. It will take time to work out this issue in detail," he added.

Nato officials say that the international force could include Russians and Ukrainians, as well as troops of other nations which have taken no active part in the air campaign, such as Greece. Their presence is seen as an advantage because it could reduce the risk of attack from remaining Serb forces. But Nato diplomats are insistent that the force must be under Nato command and con-

trol, rather than be of the type that was humiliated in Bosnia.

One diplomat argued: "Its existence could be covered by a UN resolution, but it is not going to be a blue helmet operation." Nato's planning is based on the assumption that its missions will include the force led by General Sir Mike Jackson, the Commander of the Allied Command, Europe, Rapid Reaction Corps, which is currently based in Macedonia.

Yesterday General Clark reiterated his conviction that the air campaign is being successful, arguing that it is eroding Yugoslav morale, leading soldiers to desert and encouraging draft-dodging. "We're picking up an increasing number of desertions and declining morale among the troops."

Help desperate plight of victims

THE FLOOD of refugees from Kosovo continues and the refugee camps in Macedonia and Albania are at breaking point. Aid agencies say that thousands of people are sleeping in the open. More than 600,000 Kosovo Albanians have fled their homes and most of them are destitute and face an uncertain future.

The generous readers of *The Independent* have donated a tremendous £750,000 which has helped to buy food, blankets and hygiene kits.

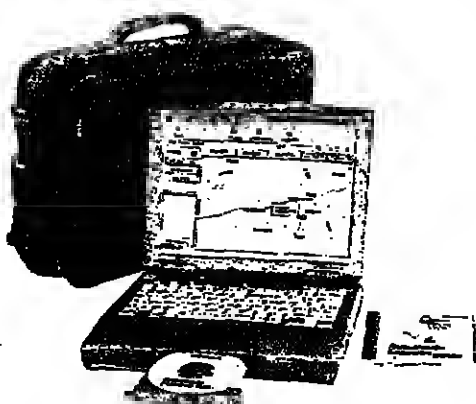
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WAR IN THE BALKANS

Refugee camps at breaking point

THE EXODUS

By KATHERINE BUTLER AND FRANCIS KENNEDY

A NEW tide of Kosovar refugees flooded into Macedonia yesterday, stretching packed camps to breaking point and raising fears that the Serb leader Slobodan Milosevic is intent on destabilising Yugoslavia's most vulnerable neighbouring state.

Three thousand arrived in Blace, the main crossing point on the border with Kosovo. More than 12,000 Albanians have crossed into Macedonia since the end of last week and the United Nations believes almost 150,000 more will come.

"We are now jammed to breaking point," said Ron Redmond, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Macedonia, after bus and train loads flooded to the already full Radusja camp near the capital, Skopje, yesterday.

A number of refugees had reported Serb atrocities, aid workers said, including one report that 16 people had been massacred at a village called Slavi last week.

Large numbers of people were reported to be waiting at railway stations along the Pristina-Blace route. Stations and bus stops were crowded and yesterday's train was too full to stop at Urosevac, between Pristina and the border.

Many of the 3,000 people who streamed into Blace on Monday were still waiting to be registered yesterday.

A new camp at Cegranje in

western Macedonia for up to 20,000 people will not be ready to take refugees until later in the week.

Mr Redmond predicted that people would soon have to sleep in the open under plastic sheeting because there are not enough tents to accommodate them.

Macedonia's Foreign Minister, Aleksandar Dimitrov, said his country could not cope with the latest influx and would certainly not be able to assist 150,000 more. The Macedonian government has been reluctant to designate new areas for refugee camps, fearing the refugees may become permanent residents and tilt the ethnic balance between Slavs and Muslims.

Reports of a further big wave of refugees were echoed by the UNHCR. "We have received very credible reports suggesting that 150,000 more people are on their way out of Kosovo," said Lyndall Sachs of the UNHCR in London. "These are the numbers we are now making contingency plans to deal with."

Rachel Reilly, a Human Rights Watch researcher in Skopje, said there were worries about overcrowding in the camps. "The two biggest transit camps are completely crammed. You can hardly walk between the tents. Sanitation is almost non-existent."

She said there were grave concerns that Macedonia,

which has taken in a total of 175,000 refugees since air strikes began, would close the borders, trapping tens of thousands of people at the border. This would violate its commitment to take in refugees under the Geneva Convention, she said. Another worry is the unreasonable restrictions on the freedom of movement of refugees inside camps, and the alleged harassment of Albanians by the Macedonian police.

She said aid supplies were still pouring into Macedonia but the country did not have the infrastructure for accommodating such vast numbers of people. "There is no long-term planning. This situation is just not sustainable."

Macedonia has sent about 26,000 refugees to third countries but airlifting refugees out of the Balkans is controversial and the red tape is slow. "We don't like this policy," said Lyndall Sachs, "but we have to do it." Britain and Spain took their first refugees on Sunday, while others have recently been sent to Austria, France, the Netherlands and Turkey.

Three plane loads left on Monday carrying 149 refugees to the Netherlands, 155 to Sweden, 134 to France, 147 to Finland and about 250 to Turkey. The refugee agencies are aware, however, that the public sympathy shown to displaced Kosovars in western Europe could turn sour. "We have had



Refugees being sprayed with disinfectant at the Macedonian border crossing point near the village of Blace yesterday. *Mladen Antonov*

letters from people in Britain saying that they want the Government to take in refugees but not asylum-seekers."

More than 365,000 people have fled from Kosovo into Albania which is still operating

an open-door policy. But the UNHCR has warned that Albania also desperately needs more international assistance.

More than 1,000 Kosovo refugees arrived on the coast

of southern Italy yesterday, prompting concern that a much-touted flood of refugees was about to become a reality. A tourist boat normally used for river cruises arrived in Bari from Montenegro carry-

ing 234 Kosovars, including 70 children, four of them newborn babies.

Other, smaller groups were found huddling on the beaches between Brindisi and Lecce or wandering in the country-

side. The police said 1,385 people arrived between midnight and noon yesterday. The vast majority of the new arrivals are from Kosovo, though they include Kurds and people from Albania.

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America sends call to 33,000 reservists

STRATEGY

By ANDREW MARSHALL in Washington

THE US yesterday called up some 33,000 military reservists for duty in Kosovo, the latest stage in its creeping escalation of the conflict.

By taking many part-timers and civilians away from their families, the call-up will bring home to America that it is being drawn into a regional conflict. The call-up had been expected for some weeks, and involves mainly back-up forces - tanker pilots and crew. Others will support the detachment of Apache helicopters in Albania and some will work on port duties.

The US has 1 million reservists, who have regular civilian jobs but stay trained for military service. The active US military force is 1.4 million.

The US has also confirmed an earlier decision to send an extra 30 KC-135 tankers to Kosovo in addition to the 120 already deployed. It is due to send in another 200 combat, reconnaissance and support aircraft to boost the number of aircraft in the area to over 1,000, of which more than 800 are American, according to the Federation of American Scientists, a Washington-based think tank.

Hungary said yesterday it had agreed that 20 Nato tankers could be based on its soil and that between 50 and 70 combat aircraft may also be based there in the future. Until now Hungary - one of Nato's newest member states and the only one with a border with Serbia - has been cautious about being drawn into the conflict.

The slow but steady growth in US forces in the region has made Congress uneasy, with

some fearing a Vietnam-style descent into a quagmire, and others wanting a more decisive engagement. A bipartisan Senate measure would authorise the President to use "all necessary force and other means", an authority the White House has not sought but which some Congressmen believe is necessary. Bill Clinton has proposed spending an extra \$6bn on the operation, but Republicans in Congress have asked to double this, in an implicit criticism of the President's policies.

In London, chief of the defence staff Sir Charles Guthrie, said Nato has launched almost 500 attacks in its air war against Yugoslavia over 227 individual sites. He estimated the air strikes had destroyed 70 of Serbia's 450 combat aircraft, including 23 out of a total of 83 MiG 29s and MiG 21s. He said Nato planes had destroyed nine strategic surface-to-air missile radar systems, nine of Serbia's 17 military airfields and 40 of its aircraft hangars.

Both Serbian oil refineries had been put out of action and 16 storage depots attacked, he said.

Sir Charles said military communications in Serbia are severely disrupted. Twenty road and rail bridges have been destroyed. All rail lines servicing Kosovo have been cut, along with three of the eight roads.

Serbia reported yesterday that Nato missiles had killed five and wounded many more in the southern Serbian town of Surdulica. Serb media said Nato air power struck Mount Golems in the region has made Congress uneasy, with

partition line could be drawn that leaves Serbia with the cathedral of the Serbian patriarchs at Pec, or with the monastery at Decani. If Kosovo is divided, there would have to be a big forced movement of population, with many Albanians surrendering their homes.

THE BALKAN QUESTION

KEY ISSUES BEHIND THE WAR EXPLAINED

Is the partition of Kosovo a practical idea?

Many people have suggested that splitting Kosovo into two might solve the dispute, leaving Serbia with most of its holy sites and the areas where Serbs are concentrated. But it is difficult to see how any agreement along the lines of the 1995 deal in Bosnia might be engineered here. The biggest problem is that Albanians are dispersed almost equally all over Kosovo while Serb settlements are isolated. One group of Serb villages clusters around Pristina, while others are grouped around Prizren, on the Albanian border, for example. There is no neat border that could be drawn through Kosovo.

Nor are the historic sites that mean so much to Serbian public opinion conveniently close to

the border with Serbia. Kosovo Polje, site of the celebrated battle of 1389, is just outside Pristina, only about 20 miles from Serbia. Likewise the monastery of Gracanica. But the Serbs' other famous sites are many miles away, on Kosovo's western border with Albania. It is difficult to see how a

TIMETABLE: DAY 35

Monday 26 April
9.40pm: US Apache helicopter crashes at an airfield in Tirana.
10.10pm: Sirens sound in Belgrade.
11pm: Explosions heard in Novi Sad and air raid sirens in Kragujevac.
Midnight: Serbs report explosions at Sombor, near Hungarian border.

Tuesday 27 April
12.10am: Huge blast shakes 23-storey building housing Milosevic's Socialist party and several broadcast stations. TV transmitter destroyed.
4am: Nato targets Lipjan region south of Pristina and nearby Slatina airport.
5.15am: All-clear sirens sound in Belgrade.
5.45am: Three cluster bombs launched near agricultural school on outskirts of Pristina. Serbs report several missiles launched in western Kosovo cities Decani and Pec.
7am: Strobe Taibott, US Deputy Secretary of State, starts talks with Igor Ivanov, Russian Foreign Minister.
7.05am: Air-raid alert in Pristina.
11am: Nato hits a bridge, for the fourth time, connecting Kosovo with rest of Serbia. Surdulica village near Bulgarian border struck by four missiles.
3pm: Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein, expresses support for Milosevic and his people.
4pm: Serbs say Nato has hit targets on Mount Golems, near Lipjan, southern Kosovo.
5pm: Serbian TV says at least five were killed in Surdulica attack.

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Killer waited an hour to strike

JILL DANDO was shot dead by someone using a hollow-point bullet fired from a 9mm handgun fitted with a silencer - details that point overwhelmingly to the work of a hitman.

Police said yesterday that they believed the killer waited for an hour outside the television presenter's home in Fulham, west London, for her to return from a shopping trip. They spoke of seven witnesses who may have seen the suspect, including a window cleaner - who thought the man was an estate agent waiting for a client - another cleaner and a mother with her child. The man made no attempt to hide or avoid being spotted, pacing up and down the road.

The Independent understands that while detectives are investigating other possibilities, they believe the killing was almost certainly committed by a professional.

BY KIM SENGUPTA AND ANDREW BUNCOMBE

Yesterday, police confirmed that Ms Dando, 37, had been shot in the side of the head at very close range with a single bullet from a semi-automatic handgun. The shot caused massive injuries and Ms Dando died a little over an hour later. The use of a hollow-pointed bullet is extremely rare.

Detectives are focusing their attention on reports of a well-groomed, smartly dressed man, carrying a mobile phone, who was seen in the road where Ms Dando lived just seconds before she was fatally wounded. The same man was seen briskly leaving the scene.

A man fitting a similar description was seen a little later climbing over railings on the bank of the river Thames a few minutes walk from Ms Dando's two-storey home. Police said the man may have been using a disguise - in particular large dark-coloured glasses which one witness noticed and said looked too big.

Then, possible a few minutes later, another man waiting at a bus stop in Fulham Palace Road saw a man running down the road. He was described as wearing a dark blue suit and sweating profusely.

Yesterday Detective Chief Inspector Hamish Campbell, the officer heading the murder inquiry, said: "At this stage we will look at every avenue. A whole range of matters will be looked at. [Ms Dando's] private life will be one of the areas that will be explored."



Jill Dando: Shot dead by a hollow-point bullet



Police investigating the killing of television presenter Jill Dando conducting house to house inquiries in west London yesterday

Russell Boyce/Reuters

Det Ch Insp Campbell worked with *Crimewatch*, the BBC television show that Ms Dando presented, during the investigation into the murder of a 12-year-old Macedonian girl in Hammersmith, west London, in May 1997.

As a routine part of the inquiry, detectives will speak to all of Ms Dando's former boyfriends, including Simon Basil who met the presenter on location at the Kruger National Park in South Africa where he worked as a game warden.

Detectives yesterday spoke to Mr Basil at his home in Portsmouth, Hampshire. Now a computer analyst, Mr Basil

came to Britain from Africa in 1997. Ms Dando broke off their relationship soon after. "I have spoken to police. They have come to my house today," he said. "I found out about Jill's death from my mum. It's all speculation at the moment about her killing. I have spoken to her family and expressed my condolences."

Ms Dando was shot at around 11.45am on Monday on the doorstep of her home after returning via Hammersmith from the Chiswick home of her fiancé, Alan Farthing. She was found by a neighbour who heard her scream and when he rushed downstairs he found Ms Dando slumped

against the door, covered in blood and unconscious.

Det Ch Insp Campbell said yesterday that there were a number of reasons why people did not report hearing a shot. But it is understood that officers believe the killer almost certainly used a silencer. One witness reported hearing a clicking noise, a sound associated with guns fitted with such devices.

Police sources said yesterday that a semi-automatic handgun fitted with a silencer and ammunition could be bought illegally for £1,000. Without a silencer the gun - most likely a Browning, Glock or a Tanfoglio - could be purchased for as little as £500.

It is understood that Ms Dando's attacker used a "quarter-tipped" bullet which are designed to spread out on impact causing maximum damage. Such bullets cannot be bought legally.

Police are also investigating whether Ms Dando's killing could be the result of a grudge borne against her because of her work with the *Crimewatch* programme. Officers have spoken to co-presenter Nick Ross and other members of the programme's team about security in the wake of the shooting. However, their initial inquiries through police informants have revealed nothing about anyone trying to

obtain a hitman "to do Jill Dando".

Officers are also investigating the possibility that Ms Dando was killed by a stalker, although they said yesterday that she had made no recent complaint.

Medical experts said that the stalker theory could be valid. They said details of her death could fit in with someone who had become obsessed by her, and who might even be suffering from De Clerambault's syndrome, a rare form of sexual obsession.

The type of gun used was banned following the Dunblane school massacre in Scotland in March 1996, but hundreds are believed still to be in circulation.

Criminologist Kate Broadhurst, of the Scarman Centre for the Study of Public Order, Leicester, said: "The sawn off shotgun is the weapon of choice for the bank robber... this is the weapon of the drug dealer and the weapon of the professional criminal." The type of bullet used in the attack has only been used in a handful of incidents in Britain.

Mr Campbell said that his team was examining a range of possible motives for the murder. "It could either be a stalker or a hitman. However, there are many theories to be explored and nothing will be left untouched. Everything is being looked at."

Faked images of Dando abound on the Net

JILL DANDO was not only a regular visual visitor to millions of homes around the country, she was on-call day and night at the mere touch of a button.

A plethora of images of her, both innocent and obscene, were depicted on the Internet - available to devoted fans as well as those with a more sinister motive.

Yesterday, as detectives investigating her murder continued to explore the option that she may have been killed by a stalker, it was evident that such a murderer would have had ample cyber-material to fuel his fantasy.

Her unofficial home page, which closed down on Monday, was the most regularly accessed site on the Celebrity Webring, which attracts more than 100,000 hits a month.

And this was just one of many offerings which either eulogised the television star or reduced her to a pornographic fantasy by superimposing her face on a naked body.

Yesterday many of these sites fell quiet out of respect but dozens more continued to display photographs of Ms Dando without any reference to the horror which had cut short her life.

BY TERRI JUDD

The BBC Online page was one of several sites to carry genuine tributes to the star from fans, colleagues and charities. Acting as an impromptu book of condolence, it was receiving e-mails expressing sympathy at the rate of four a minute yesterday.

But they provided a sharp contrast to others such as Nude Television Stars & Celebrities which boasted blue movies or other sites which offered fake "hardcore pictures" of everyone from Elizabeth Hurley to Carol Smillie.

Yesterday Dr Sidney Crown, a consultant psychotherapist to the Royal London Hospital who regularly deals with stalking victims, said: "It [a website] provides a lot of scope for potential stalkers. There are always vulnerable people who are borderline who can be pushed over the edge by such things."

"Although a sophisticated person who saw a celebrity's face superimposed on a naked body would not give it any credibility other more vulnerable people may choose to believe it is real. The images fuel their own fantasy of that person undressing."

Brother tells of moment he heard of the murder

BY GARY FINN

JILL DANDO's brother said yesterday that when he saw his sister three weeks ago, she could barely contain her excitement over her forthcoming wedding. Nigel Dando, the chief reporter on the Bristol Evening Post, said their Sunday lunch revolved around her wedding to Alan Farthing. Yesterday both men were inconsolable.

But while Mr Farthing, 35, a gynaecologist at St Mary's Hospital in London, was too distraught to speak about the incident, Mr Dando returned to work to pay tribute to his television presenter sister.

"She was looking forward immensely to getting married... the wedding been planned to the last detail," he wrote yesterday in the *Evening Post's* sister paper the *Western Daily Press*. "I have spoken to her fiancé, Alan Farthing. He is devastated and I feel so sorry for him."

Forty-seven-year-old Mr Dando, who was comforting his father Jack, 81, said he would remember his little sister most of all for being "a very, very kind and very loving person who always put her family



Nigel Dando: Jill was a devoted sister to me

first. She was extremely natural, she was friendly, she was bubbly, she was happy, she was loving. It wasn't an act.

"I've been ill recently and she was constantly on the phone checking how I was. She was devoted to my father and was a devoted sister to me," Mr Dando added.

The journalist said he was working in the *Evening Post* newsroom yesterday when he received phone calls asking if he had heard about an incident.

"I tried to do some calls of my own to check on what had happened and then a news

flash came through on one of the TV channels.

"I'm devastated by the news. I have no idea what the motive was for this. My father is bearing up well but obviously it has come as a huge, huge shock to him, as it has to me and all her relatives and friends."

Mr Farthing's father John, 64, said yesterday of his son: "I think that the full shock has not set in. He has got a lot of extremely good friends who are being supportive. He is making regular calls to us but we are not pressuring him. It is all in his own time."

He added: "We are absolutely shattered. She was readily accepted into the family and we could not ever have wanted a better person as a daughter-in-law."

The couple had planned a wedding with a dress designed by Linda Clerach, who made Sarah, Duchess of York's wedding dress in 1986.

In a statement yesterday Ms Clerach said: "I have known Jill Dando for some years, both professionally as a dress designer and as a friend. In recent times, I was greatly honoured to have been asked by Jill to design her wedding dress. To me, Jill was an extraordinarily special person with a radiant and magnetic personality. I am utterly shocked and devastated by her untimely death."

The BBC now has the task of deciding what to do with the television programmes Ms Dando was due to appear in. It said no decision has yet been taken over the future of its new series, *The Antiques Inspectors*. The *Bafta Television Awards* on 9 May will now be solely presented by Michael Parkinson. *Crimewatch UK*, will go ahead next month but Nick Ross will present it alone.

CONTRACT KILLING is a growth business. Professional hitmen, almost unheard of in Britain only 40 years ago, can now be hired for as little as £1,000.

Experts believe more than 30 assassinations take place in Britain every year by an estimated 20 active professionals. The bodies are sometimes never found.

The murder of Jill Dando closely matches the blueprint for a professional hit, in terms of location, timing and method of execution.

Detectives say that typically, victims are targeted on their doorsteps as they arrive home or answer a knock at the door. The 9mm semi-automatic is, along with the old-fashioned revolver, the contract killer's weapon of choice.

Ms Dando's murderer also followed the first rule of such executions, which is to fire from point-blank range.

But instead of using a motor cycle for a quick getaway and wearing a crash helmet to hide his face, as is usual for hitmen, Ms Dando's murderer apparently lingered in the street, undisguised, before the killing, and left the scene on foot.

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

According to Ian McKenzie, deputy director of the Institute of Criminal Justice Studies at the University of Portsmouth, hitmen are usually low-level criminals, who are expendable if killings go wrong and who cannot be readily linked to those who paid for the hit.

He said: "They will necessarily have some expertise with firearms and may have a military background. They are also psychopaths who have lost, or never had, any concern about the sanctity of human life."

Terence Morris, emeritus professor in criminology at the London School of Economics, said such people were now readily available among the "heavies" used by criminals in the drugs and entertainment trades. He said: "The growth of clubs has produced enforcers who regard injuring people as part of their job."

According to the National Crime Squad, the ban on handguns has done little to limit the supply of firearms to criminals. Automatic weapons, smuggled from eastern Europe, are freely available.



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Jack Straw in Brick Lane yesterday with the local MP, Oona King, and Abdul Assad, mayor of Tower Hamlets PA

Police seek leader of neo-Nazi gang

POLICE WERE last night trying to track down the leader of a breakaway neo-Nazi gang which has claimed responsibility for the nail bombings in Brixton and Brick Lane.

Detectives are anxious to question Del O'Connor, the leader of the White Wolves, a renegade faction of the racist Combat 18 group, which has been calling on its supporters to initiate a race war.

A stencilled message, circulated last Friday, read: "C18 did not carry out the Brixton bombing. We, the White Wolves, did."

Last year Mr O'Connor, 39, made a film in which he boasted: "We have been forming small cells and if you're wondering where the money has gone, it's gone on guns

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Now the war is on. The development coincided with a visit by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to the scene of Saturday's bombing in Brick Lane, the heart of Britain's Bangladeshi community. Mr Straw was shown damage to windows and buildings, as well as a nail from the bomb embedded in metal sheeting above a shop.

The Home Secretary met shopkeepers in Empee Silk Fabrics and Café Naz, the businesses immediately next to the blast site. "There is no future in evil and race hatred," he said.

Mr O'Connor, a former Chelsea football hooligan, has been involved in neo-Nazi politics since the late Seventies, and is closely connected to far-right organisations in the United States, including the Ku Klux Klan.

Scotland Yard detectives are liaising with US police for information on Mr O'Connor's whereabouts.

Last November he travelled to Dallas to meet white



Del O'Connor, leader of a Combat 18 splinter group

supremacists and he is known to have attended a skinhead concert in Coventry the following month, but is said to have recently "disappeared" from his home in Wigan, Lancashire. Following the claims of responsibility from the White Wolves, police investigating the two London bombings, in which a total of 45 people were injured, want to speak to Mr O'Connor, if only to eliminate him from their inquiries.

Mr O'Connor, who comes from Streatham in south Lon-

don, close to where the Brixton bomb exploded 11 days ago, considered himself the leader of C18 in the north of England. He claimed to have "units" in Bridlington, Halifax, Preston and Oldham.

He was a skinhead in the British Movement in the late Seventies, before joining the Ku Klux Klan and becoming its UK "security officer".

Mr O'Connor set up the White Wolves at the end of 1995, after serving a three-year jail sentence for assault. He also served a six-month prison sentence in Sweden after attacking an anti-racist while visiting Swedish neo-Nazis.

The White Wolves may be named after a ruthless Nazi war unit called the Werewolves. In crudely produced pamphlets called *The Wolf*, issued from "The Wolfslair", the gang calls on members to send letter bombs to the addresses of immigrant and anti-racist organisations.

Minority communities in cities across Britain are on alert after police warnings that the bombing campaign is likely to spread outside London.

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Met admit black victim 'was not aggressive'

THE METROPOLITAN Police has been forced to issue an apology for issuing a misleading public statement about the behaviour of a black man who died after being restrained by eight police officers.

Scotland Yard apologised yesterday to the family of Roger Sylvester for the distress it caused by claiming in a press release that he had been behaving in an "aggressive and vociferous" manner. Dick Fedorico, the Met's director of public affairs, said the force now accepted that this was not true.

At the time the statement was issued, Mr Sylvester was on a life support machine. He never regained consciousness and his death is now the subject of an investigation under the supervision of the Police Complaints Authority.

Yesterday Mr Sylvester's brother, Victor, said the family was still not happy with the

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Roger Sylvester: Life support switched off

comments made by the police. "The family demanded from the outset a clear correction by the Metropolitan Police of the image left in the public mind by their press statement. We are really distressed that no proper correction or public apology

was issued by the police at the time, particularly as the errors in the statement have been reproduced time and again in the media," he said.

Inquest, a group which campaigns against deaths in custody, accused the Met's spin doctors of placing in the public domain "partial, inaccurate and deeply prejudicial information".

The comments made in the police press release were attributed to a 999 caller. But yesterday Mr Fedorico said: "The 999 call... on 11 January did not describe Roger Sylvester as behaving in either an aggressive or vociferous manner."

Mr Sylvester, 30, died in January after being held under the Mental Health Act outside his home in Tottenham, north London. He collapsed in hospital after being restrained by officers and was placed on a life support machine which was switched off a week later.

IN BRIEF

Bill Cash libel jury discharged

A HIGH COURT jury yesterday failed to reach a verdict on the MP Bill Cash's libel action against *The Sunday Mirror* for calling him a "gutless turncoat" who ditched the miners in their hour of need. The jury was discharged. Mr Cash must consider whether he wants a retrial.

Cocaine seized on banana boat

CUSTOMS OFFICERS have seized £1.7m of cocaine on a banana boat, which stopped in Falmouth, Cornwall, on the way to Poland from Colombia. The boat was inspected by customs officers who found two waistcoats, each said to be holding 8kg of 70 per cent pure cocaine.

Soldier roasted hamster to death

A SOLDIER who ironed a hamster before roasting it to death in an oven was jailed for 140 days by a court martial panel and reduced to the ranks. Lance Corporal Nigel Horsley, 23, of 29th Regiment, Royal Logistic Corp, had drunk 20 pints of beer before attacking a colleague's pet.

Chef returns apple-growers' fee

THE CHEF Gordon Ramsay has returned a £3,500 promotional fee paid to him by the Bramley Apple Growers Association to promote their traditional fruit - after he decided to use Granny Smith apples instead during a filmed cookery demonstration.

Girls' prison conditions 'unlawful'

BY JO BUTLER

GIRLS AND young women are being held illegally in a prison where inmates are still "slopping out" - a practice which was supposed to have ended years ago, a report warned yesterday.

An inspection of Brockhill women's prison in Redditch, Worcestershire, found that under-21s were being held in adult prison cells.

The Chief Inspector of Prisons, Sir David Ramsbotham, said it contravened a legal ruling two years ago that young prisoners should be held in designated accommodation and suggested the inmates could be being held illegally.

Sir David also criticised lavatory arrangements at the prison, where chamber pots are sometimes used overnight.

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE RATE CHANGE

Rate of interest charged to variable rate loans will reduce by 0.10% from the 1st May 1999. This notice is applicable to borrowers whose mortgage payments are updated annually. The effect of this change will be included in the Annual Update of payments in January 2000. The variable base rate of mortgage interest will be 6.85% for residential mortgages and 7.85% for commercial mortgages.

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The restoration of the Great Court includes the repair of the interior surface and the reinstatement of the original azure-blue, cream and gold decorative scheme devised by the original architect Sydney Smirke. His 1857 scheme has been uncovered beneath layers of paint from the three previous redecorations.

[illegible]

Earl delivers double whammy on hereditaries' demise

AS HISTORICAL tableaux go the Secretary of State for Scotland's last appearance at the despatch box before the Scottish elections lacked a certain oomph - not very surprising given that one of the more important dramatis personae, Alex Salmond, was nowhere to be seen. "What's your leader?" shouted Labour backbenchers at the lonely John Swinney, the sole member of the Scots Nats who could be spared from shoring up the party's collapsing election hopes. But Mr Dewar himself took a kindly line on his isolation. "In case anyone says something nasty about that from my side," he said, "I think we should

have some consideration for those who might lose their seats." Mr Swinney grinned bravely - sympathy is one of the vilest substances you can have poured on you by an opponent higher in the opinion polls, and he had just taken a tubful.

Mr Dewar was in a pretty chipper mood all round - buoyed up, perhaps, by the exciting refrain that rang through ministerial replies: "From 1 July 1999 this will be a matter for the Scottish Parliament" - and though there weren't many opportunities for his dry wit he did his best. After his very last question as Secretary of State, a drably informative reply to Teddy Taylor: he

apologised for the lack of entertainment: "I'm not sure that's the most exciting answer I've given but I hope, as it's likely to be my last, that it will have helped the Honourable Member." Mr Taylor muttered something sceptical about the prospect of ever seeing some Scottish members again. But Mr Dewar had reassurance: "He and I have been shouting abuse at each other for some 30 years - I'm sure he'll want that admirable level of co-operation to continue."

The portridge of the Commons will lose some of its salt without Mr Dewar. And the Lords will undoubtedly have less savour without

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

the hereditaries too - as they proved with a brief flurry of straw-clutching during the second day of debate on the committee stage of

the House of Lords Bill. The Conservatives had detected what they claimed to be an error in the drafting of the Bill. Hereditaries did not sit by virtue of their peerages, they argued, as the current wording implies, but by virtue of a writ of summons from the Queen. The Government viewed this bit of constitutional pettifoggery with considerable suspicion, despite repeated protestations from the Opposition benches that they only had the Government's peace of mind at heart. If the Bill passed in its current form then who knows what legal challenges could follow? Lord MacKay of Ardshearnish

memorably tried to clarify matters with a sporting metaphor. Imagine that we were trying to ban cricket, he said, and had failed to be specific about ball games in the legislation: "Supposing we did not specify a hard leather ball, and we just meant balls?" He looked the picture of innocence as peers sniggered but I had a feeling he knew exactly what he was doing. And in that respect, of course, although entertaining, he doesn't deliver the unique flavour that only the hereditaries can supply. Calculated nonsense is within the grasp of a life peer. But for the wild flare of instinctive tosh you need members of more venerable

pedigree. Earl Ferrers supplied a good example yesterday, first insisting that he and his colleagues sought nothing but to protect the Government from its own folly, and then going on to point up the deep irony that Tony Blair should be fighting ethnic cleansers in Yugoslavia and pursuing "hereditary cleansing" in London. As I imagined a poignant straggle of refugees making its way across St James's Park, I realised that Earl Ferrers had pulled off a double. He supplied incontrovertible evidence of why the hereditaries should be dispatched and a reason for regretting that they soon will.

Senior Tory quits as 'civil war' deepens

THE TURMOIL at the top of the Conservative Party deepened last night when a senior Tory official resigned following William Hague's attempt to make a clean break with Thatcherism.

Michael Simmonds, the party's director of membership and marketing, is believed to have been told to leave Conservative Central Office (CCO) when he was summoned to a meeting with Michael Ancram, the party chairman, yesterday. Mr Simmonds is a close political ally of Michael Portillo, the former cabinet minister who has criticised Mr Hague's "rising star" by fellow Tory officials. Friends said he was unhappy at last week's rejection of free-market solutions for education, health and welfare by Mr Hague and Peter Lilley, his deputy. "He is the first casualty of our civil war," one Tory insider told *The Independent* last night.

Mr Simmonds, who was not available for comment, played a key role in the 1997 general election campaign as political advisor to Brian Marlowe, then party chairman, and his successor

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

Lord Parkinson, before taking over responsibility for membership involvement and marketing.

His departure followed a mole-hunt at CCO launched after it emerged that the first draft of Mr Lilley's controversial speech went even further in distancing the party from

Baroness Thatcher's legacy. The leaked draft showed that Mr Lilley had planned to say: "Most Conservatives have always accepted that the public services are intrinsically unsuited to delivery via the market." It also said "market processes have at best an auxiliary role to play" in providing health, education and welfare.

Mr Lilley watered down his speech - in which he said that the market had "only a limited role in improving public services" - after criticism from Shadow Cabinet colleagues. But the leak added to the controversy over Mr Hague's policy switch.

The party leadership sought to play down Mr Simmonds' de-

parture last night, with sources close to Mr Hague saying it was "not the end of the world".

But Tory MPs were gloomy as the news spread at Westminster. One said Mr Hague's attempt to relaunch the party with a "caring" image on public services had backfired spectacularly by advertising Tory divisions ahead of next week's elections to local authorities and the Scottish and Welsh assemblies.

Tory headquarters said in a statement that Mr Simmonds had resigned his office. Mr Ancram said: "Michael Simmonds has given substantial and committed service to our party, for which I am grateful."

Mr Hague's allies insisted he would press on with his drive to reposition the party. "He is determined to get the message across that we are committed to the public services as predominantly taxpayer-funded organisations," one aide said.

Today Labour will seek to exploit the Tory divisions, with three ministers claiming the Tories are still "lurching to the right" on policy despite Mr Hague's "warm words".



The judges assessing MPs' work yesterday. From left, Viscount Falkland, Sue Lawley, Simon Hoggart, Judith Kerr, Richard Cork Tom Craig

MPs paint their memories of childhood

MORE THAN 260 MPs had their painting talents and their memories assessed yesterday by a judging panel put together by the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The charity, which is building up to a campaign climax next month, has persuaded MPs of all parties in England to visit pre-schools - which cater for under-fives outside main-

EDUCATION

BY ANNA DEDHAR

stream schooling and rely on voluntary funding and grants - talk to parents and children, and paint a childhood memory.

Three pictures were chosen yesterday and the artists will take part in a "paint-off" for the alliance's "From Playdough to

Plato" day in London on 12 May. Margaret Lochrie, chief executive of the charity, said yesterday the competition aimed to highlight the importance of play and learning for children, particularly in areas of poverty and unemployment where facilities at home may be few.

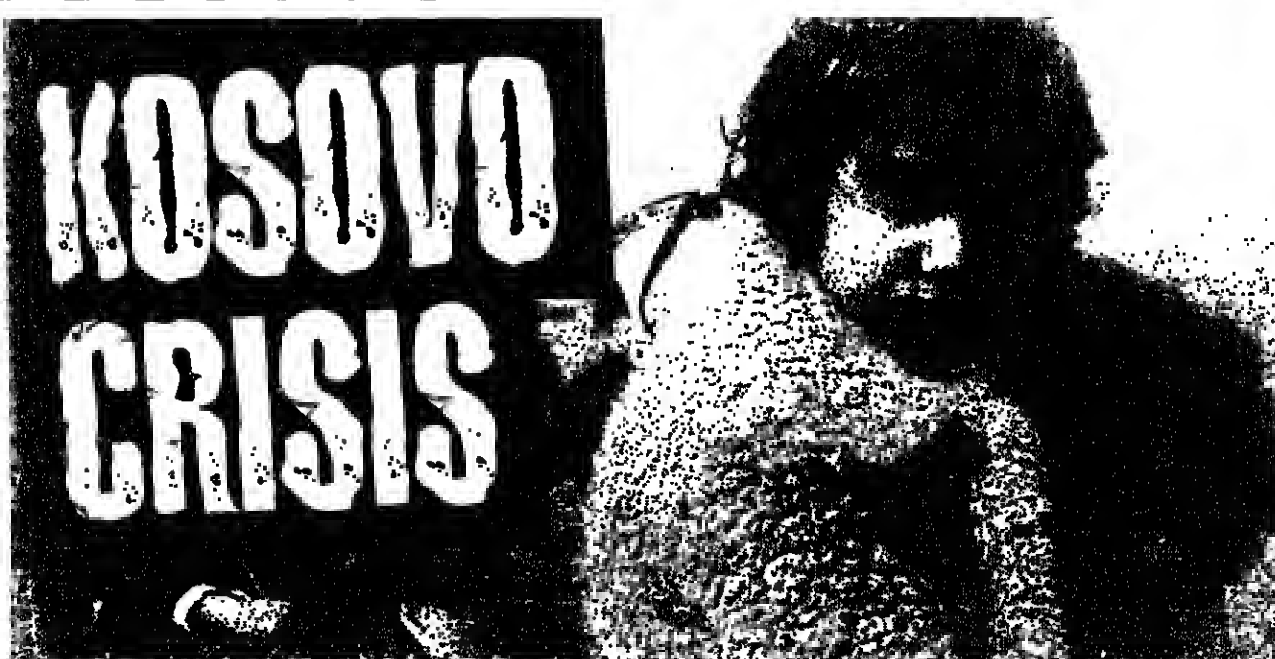
Mrs Lochrie said that of 17,500 pre-schools, 1,500 had

closed last year and 1,700 were threatened this year. She added that the introduction of the minimum wage had put an extra burden on many which "were operating on a shoe-string".

Margaret Hodge, Education minister, last month announced an independent review to look at pre-school closures, which is due to report in August.



Spider, by the Tory party leader, William Hague



Irvine warns peers their legal challenge is doomed

THE LORD Chancellor gave a firm warning to hereditary peers yesterday that any attempts to mount a legal challenge over plans to scrap their voting rights were "doomed to failure".

Lord Irvine of Lairg insisted during the resumed committee stage of the House of Lords Bill that the legislation in its present form was "water-tight" and in "no way unambiguous or obscure in its intent".

"The Tories intend to exploit an apparent legal loophole, saying a key part of the Bill is flawed and cannot be imple-

HOUSE OF LORDS

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

mented until the end of the current five-year Parliament.

Lord Mackay of Ardshearnish, for the Opposition, quoted a 1632 case when the Earl of Bristol did not receive the customary writ from Charles I but petitioned the House successfully and took his seat.

This meant hereditaries who did not receive the writ would be able to petition the new Parliament for the right to be summoned. "The lawyer says: 'Nobody is a member of the

House of Lords by virtue of an hereditary peerage. Membership of the House is conferred by obedience to a writ of summons'."

"There are those who say the writ is merely a summons. That once it has been answered, once the peer has come to this House then the writ cannot be used as a means to eject a peer. A peer who has answered the writ and taken his oath, sits here as of right. This Act is going to set aside centuries of constitutional practice and precedent."

But Lord Irvine insisted that the abolition of hereditaries

was a "concept which the ordinary man in the street, and the judges, will have no difficulty in construing".

Earlier, Lord Trefgarne, a former defence minister, said peers were determined to defy the Government and petition the Lords on the grounds of the historical precedent once the legislation has passed.

"I think the position will be that if we are excluding from the House at the end of this session by the alleged effect of the present Bill, then come the next session we can come back and say, 'Excuse me, we are ready to start again.'"

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Lawrence leak report soon

THE INQUIRY into the leaking of the report on Stephen Lawrence's death will be reporting shortly, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said.

Access pledge

DISABLED PEOPLE will get full access to shops, restaurants and banks from 1 October, the Employment minister, Margaret Hodge said.

Tourist board

A NEW body, the English Tourism Council, is to be set up, the Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith announced.

Back in jail

THE HOME Office minister, George Howarth, said more than 300 "tagged" prisoners have had their licences revoked or been returned to custody this year.

Fresh talks will try to end the Ulster impasse

NORTHERN IRELAND

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

all that he could to assist the search for a breakthrough in the deadlock, but the two leaders were agreed that there was little sign of any progress.

Privately, Mr Blair has told his colleagues that a way through the impasse could be found quite easily, if the two sides, Sinn Féin and the Unionists, were prepared to compromise. He still believes that the Hillsborough declaration remains the best way through the blockage, but that it is now virtually a dead letter with the main parties.

John Hume, the leader of the nationalist SDLP, has put forward a fresh initiative, suggesting that the Sinn Féin leaders, Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, should be appointed to the assembly's executive, but that they could be removed if there was any return to violence by the IRA.

THE HOUSE

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

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Food profits report request

THE GOVERNMENT was urged yesterday to allow the public to see if supermarkets were making unjustified profits. Tim Yeo, Tory Agriculture spokesman, called for the publishing of quarterly figures comparing farm gate and retail prices.

Last address

DONALD DEWAR addressed the Commons for the last time as Secretary of State for Scotland. Mr Dewar has made it clear he will seek to become Scotland's first Minister after the elections to the Holyrood Parliament on 6 May.

Today's agenda

Commons At 2.30pm Northern Ireland questions, Prime Minister's questions.

Save the Children from violence

The war in Kosovo shows only too clearly how conflict and violence can threaten children today. Over half the population of Kosovo is under 18, so this conflict is hitting the young particularly hard.

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are distributing emergency parcels containing essential survival items - bringing desperately needed aid to young refugees in Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro.

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Bishops speak out for SNP policies

SCOTLAND'S ROMAN Catholic bishops yesterday indicated a clear preference for the policies of the Scottish National Party. A statement from the bishops, to be read out at every Catholic church on Sunday, represents a snub to Labour, traditionally the party of Scottish Catholics, and marks a new low point in relations with the Government.

In line with SNP policy, the Catholic hierarchy's document opposes Labour's introduction of university tuition fees and demands that "nuclear weapons are banished and resources re-targeted to our people's needs". In a side-swipe at Labour, which has moved to close Catholic schools in a number of areas, the document calls for legislators who will respect and support Catholic schools.

Although the bishops stop short of endorsing the SNP's decision to forgo the one penny Budget cut in income tax to fund public services, the bishops state: "Politicians must be prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that adequate funding is made available for the care of the sick and the elderly."

Eddie Barnes, editor of the *Scottish Catholic Observer*, a weekly religious newspaper, said: "Clearly some of the SNP policies are in accordance with what the Catholic church has long been saying. There is some obvious crossover."

However, the 800-word statement stops short of actually endorsing the SNP stating that "it is not our intention to advise electors which party or candidates they should favour".

Publication was delayed for a week after some senior clerics said the original was too party political. It is understood that the first draft was watered down to place the Catholic

BY JACK O'SULLIVAN
Scotland Correspondent

church equidistant between the nationalist and Unionist camps.

Moonsignor Tom Connolly, a spokesman for the Catholic church in Scotland, said: "Catholic social teaching is Catholic social teaching. If some party's policies coincide with that, so much the better. The idea of the church being pro-SNP is absolute lunacy."

Cardinal Thomas Winning, leader of Scotland's Catholics, has made no secret of his sympathies for nationalism. At a conference of European bishops last year he said, to SNP delight, that Scottish nationalism was "mature, respectful of democracy and international outlook". Before the 1992 general election, the then Archbishop Winning attacked Labour's pro-abortion policy.

Last night, the SNP welcomed the latest intervention from the Catholic bishops. An SNP spokesman said: "The fact that some of the bishops' views accord with SNP policy positions simply reflects the fact that those positions represent consensus opinion in Scotland." A Labour spokesman refused to comment.

Yesterday's development came after a statement sympathetic to nationalism from the Rev John Cairns, who oozes moorh takes over as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Mr Cairns highlighted the General Assembly's long-standing support for devolution, and added: "If it transpired that the people of Scotland wanted something more, on the same basis the Church could well support that as well. The key thing is the wishes of the people of Scotland."



Alex Salmond, SNP leader, canvassing Nancy Clarke (left) in Dunfermline yesterday as her friend avoids the glare of the cameras PA

Blair under pressure to reveal Lib-Lab 'vote pact' for Scotland

TONY BLAIR was under pressure last night to disclose details of a secret deal between Labour and the Liberal Democrats which could lead to a coalition in the new Scottish Parliament.

Alex Salmond, the Scottish National Party leader, wrote angry letters to both the Prime Minister and the Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, last night after senior Labour figures denied there was any deal.

A meeting in 1996, detailed in a new biography of Peter Mandelson by *The Independent's* chief political columnist, Donald Macintyre, thrashed out the bones of the agreement. Held at the home of the now Lord Chancellor, Derry Irvine, it also included Mr Blair, Mr Ashdown,

BY FRANK ABRAMS
AND JACK O'SULLIVAN

Robin Cook, Gordon Brown and the now Secretary of State for Scotland, Donald Dewar. Other senior Liberal Democrats present included Archie Kirkwood, MP for Roxburgh and Berwick, and Menzies Campbell, now Liberal Democrat foreign affairs and defence spokesman.

The book said the two parties also promised to strive not to damage each other in the coming general election, and to work towards a coalition in Scotland if Labour failed to win a working majority in the elections for its new Parliament.

Pressed about the meeting yesterday, Mr Dewar refused to deny it had taken place. "I have not got an agreement with the

Liberal Democrats. If a meeting took place, certainly you can take it that as a result there is no agreement. I do not have a list in my back pocket of Liberal Democrats," he told Labour's press conference in Glasgow yesterday morning.

Some Labour aides predicted that there would be Liberal Democrat ministers in the new Parliament, though, while others suggested there would be opposition to the move from both Labour and Liberal Democrat members. Moves at Westminster to bring the Liberal Democrats and Labour closer together met with fierce opposition from some quarters.

Mr Salmond dismissed the deal as "deeply undemocratic". In letters to Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown, he demanded to

know whether Mr Macintyre's "impeccably sourced" book was wrong or whether Mr Dewar was failing to tell the whole truth. "The people of Scotland have a right to know what was decided at this secret London meeting in relation to the Scottish Parliament. Who is correct - Donald Macintyre or Donald Dewar?"

"This is a major revelation which exposes the real motivation of Loonon Labour and the Lib Dems in this campaign. They have tried to carve up the Scottish election campaign in London - on a cynical and negative anti-SNP agenda," he said.

The Conservatives also reacted angrily to the revelation. A party spokesman accused the Liberal Democrats of be-

having like "concubines", favouring anyone who might advance their cause. "Heaven knows what was discussed. It looks as if they were trying to stitch up the Scottish elections. It is pretty vile to patronise the Scottish electorate like this and reveals a very Machiavellian approach to what was meant to be a refreshing election for Scotland," he said.

Mr Dewar had been repeatedly pressed for details of the meeting after reports that he might be prepared to oppose Mr Blair on the issue and refuse to form a coalition.

Yesterday the former Liberal leader, Lord (David) Steel of Aikwood, said a deal with Labour now looked most likely because it would almost certainly be the largest party.



CAMPAIGNS BRIEFING 8 DAYS TO GO

IN SCOTLAND, Labour promised property reforms which would give communities the right to buy the land on which they live. The Liberal Democrats published a survey which, they said, showed Labour was not delivering on its health promises. Conservatives continued their attack on university tuition fees, publishing a Bill for their abolition which they said should be introduced in the first session of the Scottish Parliament.

LABOUR is on course to hold the marginal Monmouth seat. An NOP poll for the television company HTV gives Labour 40 per cent of the vote, the Tories 33 per cent, Lib Dems 10 per cent and the Plaid Cymru 9 per cent and the "Monmouthshire candidate" 8 per cent.

TWO MILLIONAIRES have donated £100,000 to help the Scottish Tories. Sir Graham Kirkham and Lord Harris of Peckham each gave £50,000. Labour received £50,000 from the AEU and £25,000 from the TGWU.

WELSH BAND The Manic Street Preachers have refused to allow one of their songs to be used by Labour in the assembly elections. It contains a quote from Aneurin Bevan: "This is my truth, tell me yours". Apparently the Manics' lyricist, Nicky Wire, is more Old than New Labour and is disgusted with the party's rightward shift.

"I THINK it's extraordinary in 1999 to think you can solve problems by bombing" - Alex Salmond, SNP leader.

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CELLNET

Tesco and Unilever ban GM products

GOVERNMENT reassurances about the safety of genetically modified foods were further undermined yesterday when both Tesco and Unilever announced they were banning GM ingredients from their products.

Britain's biggest supermarket chain and the world's largest food manufacturer unveiled their new policy just hours after Jack Cunningham, the Minister for the Cabinet Office, made a staunch defence of the benefits of GM crops and foods.

Tesco revealed it was working with Greenpeace to remove modified ingredients from its own meals and would label nearly all other products that contained them.

The company's decision follows pressure from customers and criticism from environmentalists that it was the only one of the big chains to refuse to respond to public concern.

Tesco, the market leader with a turnover of £18.5bn, joins Sainsbury's, Iceland, Marks and Spencer and Waitrose in seeking GM-free products and boosting its organic range.

More than 150 of Tesco's 3,000 own-label products contain modified soya and maize and the chain has agreed to work with Greenpeace in a task force to find reliable sources of GM-free ingredients.

John Longworth, Tesco trading law and technical director, said customers believed GM products offered no new benefits. "We will remove GM ingredients where we can and

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

label where we can't. In the short and medium term I expect the number of products containing GM ingredients to decline steadily, quite possibly to zero."

Peter Melchett, executive director of Greenpeace UK, said that the spotlight was now on Nestle to phase out the ingredients.

Greenpeace said it was "delighted" that Unilever, owner of Birds Eye Walls and one of the most popular manufacturers of ready meals, had taken its decision.

Mr Cunningham had told MPs the GM foods and crops were now "a reality" and helped to boost Britain's £70bn a year biotechnology industry.

Mr Cunningham, who chairs the Cabinet committee set up by Tony Blair to co-ordinate Government policy on GM issues, told the environmental audit select committee that "media hysteria" had skewed public debate to date.

"Some aspects of the public debate have been ill-informed, often fuelled by a barrage of media hysteria," he said.

About 4.5 million hectares of land are in cultivation in the UK. GM crops have grown for 19 years in North America with almost no effects on biodiversity.

Mr Cunningham did confirm that the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Officer had been commissioned to look into the health and safety aspects of GM foods and their report would be made publicly available in the next few weeks.



British surgeons are alarmed at findings which showed that plastic surgery patients are more likely to have personality disorders. Corbis

Depression and suicide bids rife in patients seeking cosmetic surgery

PEOPLE WHO request cosmetic surgery on their faces are more likely to be suffering from personality disorders, a new study has found.

The study, which is to be presented today at an American plastic surgery conference, reveals that half of those seeking "nose jobs" suffer from clinical depression and nearly a third have attempted suicide. Its author, Dr Henri Gaboriau, of the Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery, at Tulane University, in New Orleans, said that the study was intended to help doctors decide in which cases plastic surgery was appropriate.

"The study attempts to describe the personality disorders of patients seeking facial plastic surgery to allow the specialist to make an informed decision to treat, or not to treat," he said. "Some of these patients may benefit from having surgery but the majority may not need cosmetic surgery to address their problems."

BY CHERRY NORTON
Social Affairs Correspondent

The findings showed that there was a high level of conflict between surgeons and patients suffering personality disorders after surgery and these patients were more likely to seek legal redress.

British cosmetic surgeons said that the findings were alarming and warned surgeons to investigate patients' motivations for having surgery before they operated.

"Our surgeons are always on the lookout for patients with a personality disorder or for patients who have got expectations that are far too high or cannot be corrected by surgery," said Peter Coles, the director of the Harley Medical Group, one of the largest private cosmetic and plastic surgery providers in Britain.

"Surgeons see a lot of patients and can sense if they are unbalanced. Most of our patients are well-adjusted people and have just one small problem,

such as their nose or ears, which they want to correct."

The American researchers reviewed a wide range of studies of patients who had undergone plastic surgery. They found that over two thirds of all cosmetic surgery was carried out on the face or neck and that nearly a third of these operations were on the nose.

Assessments of the patients prior to their operations showed that 50 per cent were clinically depressed, 70 per cent suffered from anxiety, 20 per cent had problems with substance abuse, and nearly 30 per cent had attempted suicide.

Further analysis of 133 patients revealed that two-

thirds suffered from personality disorders. A quarter were categorised as narcissism and, one in twenty as having an obsessive-compulsive disorder. One in 40 showed schizophrenic or paranoid tendencies.

"A person's self-image plays a key role in the development of personality. Young men and women with a subjective negative impression of their self image develop defence mechanisms to cope with low esteem," said Dr Gaboriau.

"Later in life, they may request cosmetic surgery to 'normalise' a perceived abnormal appearance but cosmetic surgery may not be the answer," he said.

WHO attacks rules on tobacco

BY JOHN VON RADOWITZ

TOBACCO PRODUCERS should be as tightly regulated as the manufacturers of nicotine patches, the head of the World Health Organisation said yesterday.

Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, director-general of the WHO, told a meeting of pharmaceutical regulators in Berlin: "A cigarette is a euphemism for a cleverly crafted product that delivers just the right amount of nicotine to keep its user addicted for life before killing the person."

She called on international food and drug regulators to bring cigarettes under the same rules that govern the sales and promotion of nicotine products designed to help people give up smoking.

It is the first time such a move has been urged by the WHO. Dr Brundtland said the organisation planned to convene a high-level meeting of regulators to assess the extent to which the tobacco industry had tried to cover up the reality of nicotine addiction.

Dr Brundtland added: "Part of the failure of past tobacco control stems from the incongruous way tobacco products have been regulated. Tobacco's selling price is often regulated through taxes. The cigarette box is marginally controlled in many countries through mandated health warnings. And tobacco advertising is controlled only in some countries."

"But the root problem... is the product itself. Cigarettes are inherently dangerous products. The tobacco companies, despite knowing this for many years, have steadfastly chosen not to remedy this, and to press forward their sales."

Clive Bates, director of the anti-smoking group Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), said: "We've never seen anything like this from WHO before. It signals a new determination to tackle tobacco at the global level."

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The Independent/Independent on Sunday have teamed up with the newly combined Hilton and Stakis Hotels to offer readers '2 nights for the price of 1' at hotels around the country. As part of the celebration of this merger you can enjoy two nights' accommodation, including breakfast, in a range of three to five star hotels from as little as £19.25 per person per night.*



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THE INDEPENDENT

Barrister 'sweatshops' are outlawed

BARRISTER "SWEATSHOPS" where trainee barristers are paid nothing to do administrative work and make simple court applications, will have to change their practices, after a landmark legal opinion obtained by the Bar Council.

The opinion, given by three barristers - one a Queen's Counsel - has been sent to all heads of chambers. It makes it clear that all trainee barristers, known as pupils, are now sub-

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

ject to the 1998 EU Working Time Regulations, while those over the age of 26 qualify for the national minimum wage.

As a significant proportion of barristers' pupils are over 26, the opinion will mean that chambers must pay pupils £3,000 a year. In the past they have paid them nothing. This practice, mainly restricted to

smaller sets of chambers, has obliged aspiring barristers to take unfunded pupilage.

Steve Doherty, a spokesman for the Bar Council, said that those chambers that did not comply with the guidance would be "barring the law of the land" and that the Bar Council would take a "dim view of this".

He admitted that chambers adhering to the new laws might be forced to cut the number of pupilage places available. "We

simply don't know how many unfunded pupilages there are because chambers are not obliged to tell us," he said.

But it has been common practice in some chambers to take on more pupils than can be offered permanent employment, so that there are sufficient pupils to carry out support work for senior barristers. "It's really very cheap skilled labour," said Mr Doherty.

The opinion, given by Jere-

my McNeill QC, Jennifer Eady and Sarah Moor, says that under the Working Time Regulations chambers must also give pupils three weeks' paid holiday. But it also says that chambers can enter into individual written agreements with pupils to "contract out" of the 48-hour week.

David Richmond passed his Bar exams in 1992 but after several attempts at finding a funded pupilage he was forced to

abandon his legal career and take a job as a waiter in the department store Harvey Nichols.

"I was paid much more as a waiter than I would have been as a pupil," said Mr Richmond.

"It came to a point when I had to decide how much longer I could continue living on the breadline," Mr Richmond, now a magistrates' court clerk, says that he blames the "sweatshop" mentality of some chambers for his inability to find a

pupilage. "There are dozens of talented trainee barristers without private incomes who have to sacrifice their career at the Bar because of money problems," he said.

Nigel Savage, chief executive of the College of Law, said that he welcomed the opinion because it would force chambers to pay their pupils an honest wage for an honest day's work. "If they are not prepared to do that then they shouldn't take

them on in the first place," he said.

Georgina Kent, chairman of the Young Bar, said that she too welcomed the development. "It will make chambers think how they are going to award pupilages in the future."

She added that some chambers, mainly civil sets and the better-off criminal chambers, did already pay pupils the equivalent of the minimum wage during pupilage.



Tamara Stott, of the City Ballet of London, preparing to dance in Leadenhall Market yesterday. The touring company, which was celebrating its move from Holborn to a new base at the financial heart of the City, starts a British tour with Wayne Sleep in June

Students guilty of murdering friend

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

TWO TEENAGE students who murdered a college friend before burning and burying his body were last night facing life sentences.

Neil Sayers was yesterday found guilty of murdering his close friend Russell Crookes, who was 17 at the time, by attacking him with a knife. His accomplice, Graham Wallis, had previously pleaded guilty to murder and named Sayers as his partner in the killing, which took place in May last year.

Yesterday at Maidstone Crown Court Mr Justice Newman suspended sentencing to allow the compilation of reports on the killers, after the jury raised concerns about the supervision of students at Hadlow College, near Tonbridge in Kent, where the three had been studying horticulture. As the jury returned their unanimous verdict they passed a note to the judge expressing their worries.

Mr Justice Newman adjourned the hearing until 7 May. He said: "All members of the jury expressed their concern about the lack of supervision and adequate pastoral care of the under-18s resident at the college."

The court heard that the trio had once been inseparable friends, obsessed with survival techniques and the Army, but Wallis, 18, from Croydon, Surrey, and Sayers, 19, of Gillingham in Kent, decided to kill Russell because he was "get-



Teenage killers Graham Wallis (left) and Neil Sayers

ting on their nerves" and they considered him to be a bully. The court was told that the murder took place as other students were enjoying a disco. Instead of dancing, the trio went to some nearby woods and sat around a fire, drinking beer and cider. As they walked back to college, Wallis and Sayers set about their friend, stabbing him repeatedly in the chest and legs. Wallis told the jury how Crookes pleaded for his help - and said that instead of jumping to his defence he put a hand over his former friend's mouth and stabbed him in the neck and around the head.

"Russ asked him why he'd done it. Neil said nothing and then went back and stabbed Russell again," said Wallis. "I saw the stabs to the chest and to the legs. He again asked why, before asking me to help him. I moved towards Russell and

because he had started making a kind of roar, a noise, I put my hand over his mouth and then tried to stab Russell in the neck and head."

Having made sure Crookes was dead, the pair sprayed his body with lighter fuel and set it alight before returning to their room for biscuits and orange juice. The next day they buried the remains in a shallow grave. A spokesman for Hadlow College said last night: "This is a tragedy for all concerned, particularly the families of the three young men. Our thoughts are with them at this time."

After the case, Crookes's sister, Sarah, said: "How could anybody do that to a fellow human being and a friend? We think it's the right verdict. We are relieved." Her father, Malcolm, added: "Things will never be the same."

Heart disease in rapid decline

HEART DISEASE is falling so fast among men in the upper social classes that heart-attack deaths below retirement age are becoming a thing of the past, a leading epidemiologist said yesterday.

The single biggest killer of

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

men and women in the UK claims 150,000 lives a year, but the rate is falling by 4 per cent annually and is set to drop below 100,000 deaths within 25

years, according to a report by the National Heart Forum.

Klim McPherson, professor of public health epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said: "Men under 65 are eliminating the disease - it is going down fast. Social class 1 men are becoming almost risk-free."

The trend is also clear in women, though less dramatically. There is little difference in cholesterol levels between the upper and lower social classes - the main risk factor for heart disease - but the advantage enjoyed by the rich is believed to be because they eat more fruit and vegetables, smoke less, exercise more and have better medical care.

The rapid fall in heart disease rates among the rich shows what can be achieved when the risk factors are altered, experts from the forum, an alliance of 40

medical organisations, said yesterday. But they warned that progress in the UK was still too slow and the gap between the social classes was widening.

Speaking at the launch of a report, *Looking to the Future*, Gerald Shaper, emeritus professor of clinical epidemiology at the Royal Free hospital in London, said Britain had been slower to recognise the importance of diet than other countries, such as the US and Australia, where death rates are 30 per cent lower than in the UK.

"The composition of the diet is the fundamental factor making people susceptible to heart disease. All other factors, such as smoking and high blood pressure, are aggravating factors. The US moved to alter the diet a decade before Britain. We have been very reluctant to accept that it is a nutritional disease," he said.

Blunkett deplores Radio 4 standards

BBC RADIO 4 is full of second-rate drama and undergraduate humour, according to one of its lifelong fans and latest critic, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education.

In an article, Mr Blunkett yesterday said Radio 4 had been his "window on the world". He even remembered dancing as a four-year-old with his mother to the signature tune of *The Archers*.

Of radio drama, he said: "Until a year or two ago, there were superb productions coming from the beleaguered editorial and production staff, desperately clinging to high standards, realistic sound effects and top-class acting."

Now, however, that had changed. "I fear that a lifetime's pleasure is being replaced by second-rate and poorly produced dramas which try too hard to be clever and seem too often to reflect the need to meet a quota from independent production companies rather than a high standard of quality drama."

BY JUDITH JUDITH
Education Editor

He went on to lambast a "new wave of comedy programmes which seem to reflect the worst standards of undergraduate humour". And he criticised new trailers for programmes. "[They] presume that we are jumping up and down clapping our hands while listening rather than being a part of an intelligent audience."

He urged Radio 4 to rediscover the balance between gentle entertainment and serious current affairs before the "real Radio 4" is lost for ever. A BBC spokeswoman said: "It is a shame that David Blunkett seems to have missed the recent acclaimed productions of *Plenk House* and *Villette*. We hope he will manage to hear the very different styles of comedy in *Unquiet* and the new series *Yes I Can Boogie*, written by and featuring able bodied and disabled performers, as well as tuning in to the 1999 Reith lectures."

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British police may supervise East Timor elections

INDONESIA HAS asked for a British police presence when the people of East Timor vote in their political future on 8 August. Five other countries are being asked for police to help supervise the UN-backed vote, which may lead to East Timor's independence after 23 years of harsh Indonesian rule.

BY DIARMID O'SULLIVAN
in Bali

world," Indonesia's President, B.J. Habibie, said yesterday.

The other five countries are Australia - whose Prime Minister, John Howard, met Mr Habibie yesterday - the United States, Japan, the Philippines and Germany.

It is not yet clear how many police officers will be needed. There are more than 400 villages in East Timor, many in re-

mote mountain valleys, and some diplomats have suggested that up to half a dozen foreign police might be needed for each one.

The officers would have an advisory role, helping Indonesian police to manage the voting. In practice, they will be there to see that East Timorese supporters of continued Indonesian rule do not try to thwart the vote through terrorism and violence. It is not clear whether the officers will be armed.

though it appears unlikely. Dozens, possibly hundreds, of East Timorese have been killed by loyalist militias this year. The militias have been given a free rein by Indonesian officers opposed to independence, and reports of fresh killings filter out daily.

The loyalists suspect they will be targets for retribution once Jakarta pulls out.

The request for British police officers for East Timor surprised the Foreign Office min-

ister Derek Fatchett when he flew to the Indonesian island of Bali yesterday for a meeting with Mr Habibie. "We only heard about it this afternoon. We have started to discuss some of the details with the president," he said.

However, Mr Fatchett said Britain was willing to help. "There are a number of details we have to work on: first of all, the security issues, the police involved and what is needed. The function we're talking

about, and it's very important to recognise this, is a police function. It's not a peace-keeping force," he said.

Mr Fatchett is due to fly to East Timor today to meet local leaders on the first visit by a British minister. Like many Western countries, Britain has started to take an interest in the territory after years of turning a blind eye to reports of Indonesian atrocities.

Indonesia and Portugal - the former colonial power in

East Timor - have been negotiating at the United Nations in New York a plan to allow the East Timorese greater autonomy within Indonesia. Indonesia has agreed to pull out completely from the former Portuguese colony if residents reject autonomy. In effect, the vote is a referendum on Indonesian rule.

At the talks, Mr Habibie announced that he now "fully accepts" the whole autonomy plan, including the presence of

foreign police, and it will be signed on 5 May. Australia, which has offered to pay roughly half of the cost of the vote, wants the police to go in by the end of May.

Britain and Australia are presenting Mr Habibie's statement as a breakthrough.

"We have got the green light to go through to the ballot," Mr Fatchett said. Mr Habibie has "the power, responsibility and wish" to see the East Timor problem solved peacefully.

Arafat fails to set date for independence

YASSER ARAFAT, the Palestinian leader, backed away yesterday from declaring an independent state next month at a meeting of Palestinian leaders in Gaza.

He is under pressure from the US not to declare Palestinian independence and he does not want to do anything to help Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, to win re-election on 4 May.

Mr Arafat told some 100 members of the Central Council of the Palestine Liberation Organisation meeting in his Gaza office that Palestinians have the right to declare independence, but he did not name the day when they would.

Earlier, Mr Arafat received a letter from President Bill Clinton stating that the US wanted to wrap up talks on issues such as Jerusalem, refugees, settlements and borders within a year. President Clinton said the Palestinians had the right to be "a free people on their own land" and he condemned the expansion of Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

Such American declarations, which seldom bring practical benefits to Palestinians, have lately begun to pall with some Palestinian leaders. Standing outside Mr Arafat's heavily guarded office, Marwan Barghout, the leader on the West Bank of Fatah, the main Palestinian political movement, said Palestinians had already signed several agreements with Israel in the White House, but they have never been implemented.

Mr Barghout said he

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Gaza

favoured declaring a Palestinian state on 4 May, at the end of the five-year interim period of the Oslo accords. He said Palestinians were frustrated. A small crowd gathered behind steel barriers some distance from Mr Arafat's office, shouting: "Yes to the state of the free on the fourth of May."

Ahmed Yassin, leader of the Islamic movement Hamas, and three of his senior lieutenants attended the closed session of the Central Council as observers. They said all negotiations with Israel should be broken off.

In recent months Mr Arafat has relied almost wholly on international pressure as a lever on Mr Netanyahu, but without demonstrable effect.

Nabli Sbaath, one of his senior aides, said that in many ways the Palestinians already had an independent state in Gaza, but "it is a state under siege".

This siege can be lifted only by agreement with Israel and not a unilateral declaration of independence by the Palestinians, which would not change the facts on the ground. In the past six months Israel has built 12 new settlements on the West Bank, despite expressions of American displeasure.

Workers in Gaza can get into Israel only after stringent security checks. The head of the Israel prison at Erez, one of the main checkpoints, was suspended this week after an Israeli army investigation,

started by a soldier's complaint, revealed that Palestinian workers in detention were beaten, humiliated and denied medical attention.

The Central Council meeting in Gaza is likely to adjourn until after the Israeli elections, which Mr Arafat hopes Mr Netanyahu loses. This also enables the Palestinian leader to use the threat of a declaration of independence as a lever on the US to become involved in negotiations with Israel.

Mr Netanyahu claims his toughness prevents the Palestinians claiming statehood. He said yesterday that Mr Arafat "knows that as long as I am prime minister of Israel, such a state, with Jerusalem as its capital, will not be established".

A central theme of the Israeli prime minister's election campaign is that he has stopped suicide bomb attacks, made Israelis feel safer but has made few concessions to the Palestinians. He had threatened to formally annex parts of the West Bank if the Palestinians declare an independent state.

The Israeli opposition One Israel party has accused Mr Netanyahu of brokering a "honeymoon" in relations between Mr Arafat and the US. But the Israeli leader may calculate that with a US presidential election he has little to fear with pressure from Washington.

There were momentary fears that the bombers had returned yesterday when a car blew up in Rishon LeZion outside Tel Aviv yesterday, killing a child and injuring three people. Police suspect the motive was criminal, not political.



Yasser Arafat greets supporters at his meeting in Gaza yesterday

Reuters

German denies shooting 500 Jews

BY FRANZ-NORBERT PIONTEK
in Stuttgart

A SUSPECTED Nazi war criminal said at the start of his trial yesterday that he felt sick watching concentration camp guards shoot hundreds of Jews in the head, but denied he ever pulled a trigger himself.

Alfons Goetzfrid, a former Soviet citizen, is charged by German prosecutors with aiding the Nazi massacre of 17,000 Jews during the Second World War and of having shot 500 people himself.

"I had to load the machine-guns with magazines, and loaded other pistols. But that was it," he told the Stuttgart state court. "The victims were shot from behind and they screamed, moaned and cried. It made me sick."

Goetzfrid, an ethnic German who was born and lived in the Soviet Union until 1951 before emigrating after the collapse of Communism, spent a year in investigative custody before being released in March, pending the outcome of the trial. The state prosecutor Kurt Schrimm said the court had decided to free him on bail as it did not think he would try to evade justice.

Goetzfrid volunteered for the German army after it overran Soviet Ukraine in 1941, and originally looked after horses and worked as a translator before joining the Gestapo in Lvov in 1943. Many non-Russian nationalists and anti-Communists joined the invading German forces to fight Moscow's Red Army.

He admits to having worked for the Gestapo, and spent 13 years in a Soviet labour camp in the Arctic after the war. Officials say that will count towards any sentence in Germany, ensuring that he will spend little, if any, more time in jail. The maximum term he faces is 15 years.

On his release from labour camp, Goetzfrid lived in what is now independent Kazakhstan, to where Stalin deported many of the ethnic Germans who had lived in Russia since tsarist times. Many of them have resettled in Germany since 1991.

Goetzfrid came to the attention of the authorities when he gave testimony in 1997 to prosecutors investigating another war crimes suspect.

The prosecution said that despite later denials, Goetzfrid had admitted in pre-trial investigations that, when a member of the Gestapo, he shot 500 Jewish men, women and children in November 1943 at the Majdanek camp in Poland in a two-day massacre dubbed Operation Harvest Festival.

Goetzfrid, who wore a dark sweater and appeared frail, is also charged with assisting the murder of 17,000 Jews around Lublin in Poland and Lvov in Ukraine in 1942 and 1943. (Reuters)

IN BRIEF

Algerian president takes power

ABDELAZIZ BOUTEFLIKA was sworn in as President of Algeria yesterday. Mr Bouteflika, a former foreign minister, was the only candidate in the election on 15 April and the ceremony was boycotted by opposition groups, who have accused the military of rigging the polls.

Nanny denies child abuse charges

A NANNY who was allegedly filmed kicking and hitting the two children in her care could face up to 20 years in prison. Joan Kahn, 59, appeared in a court in Norwalk, Connecticut, to plead not guilty to charges of abuse.

Racism ends German book tour

A PRIZE-WINNING African author, Amma Darko, called off a book tour in Germany after youths in the eastern town of Schwerin, an island resort, shouted racist insults and tossed a beer bottle at her during her first reading.

Florida warns of alligator threat

FLORIDA'S ONE million alligators are on the prowl for mates and food, posing a threat to people and pets, state wildlife officials said yesterday. Several alligators have been seen walking by ponds and on a golf course recently.

Clinton takes on the gun lobby

PRESIDENT BILL Clinton used public anger over the Colorado school shootings to push for more restrictions on guns yesterday. Although the legislative plan he proposed has fragile hopes for survival, the White House was able to use the occasion to put further pressure on the National Rifle Association (NRA), the main lobbyist for both gun owners and manufacturers.

"The NRA and other pro-gun organisations need to support the administration's efforts ... to put reasonable regulations on the use and the possession of guns," said Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder over the weekend.

The President wants to extend a law requiring background checks on gun purchasers to those who buy explosives. He was also preparing to propose making parents liable for their children's crimes, raising the legal age for handgun possession from 18 to 21, making child safety locks on guns mandatory, and toughening the laws on gun shows. There is a clutch of other restrictions, many of them part of a failed measure from last year.

The proposed new anti-gun legislation has little chance of making it through Congress intact. Both houses have Republican majorities opposing gun control, and the National Rifle Association gave \$1.3m (£800,000) to the Republican party for last year's elections.

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

But, by putting further pressure on the NRA, the White House hopes it will help to make the gun issue more visible in a country that seems more willing to blame pop music or trench coats for the Colorado killings than the possession by teenagers of semi-automatic weapons.

The NRA has run into increasing trouble in the last few years as it has gained a reputation for right-wing extremism. While Washington may still be home ground for the NRA, it is losing battles elsewhere at state level. One of its main efforts over the last few years has been to get laws passed to permit the carrying of concealed weapons, but a vote in Missouri on the issue went against it earlier this month.

It has also become estranged from some of the gun manufacturers, who fear that its reputation for right-wing extremism may not be particularly useful in helping them tackle legal and political challenges. Seven cities are currently suing several of the gun manufacturers. The NRA came under heavy criticism in the wake of the school killings for pressing on with its plans to hold its annual meeting in Denver. It agreed to the wishes of local officials and cut back most of its programme from three days to one, leaving only the formal annual business. But it would not stop the meeting completely, even though the city agreed to pay its costs. "We have an obligation to our members," said a spokesman for the NRA.

The city insisted that it did not want any NRA presence at all. "We don't want them here," said Allegra Haynes, the president of Denver City Council.

Meanwhile, it emerged that the 18-year-old girlfriend of Columbine High School gunman Dylan Klebold apparently bought at least two of the weapons used in the attack at a Denver-area gun show.

Investigators were also checking a report from a Colorado Springs gun dealer that the other gunman, Eric Harris, was among five teenagers who tried to buy a machine gun and another weapon last month.

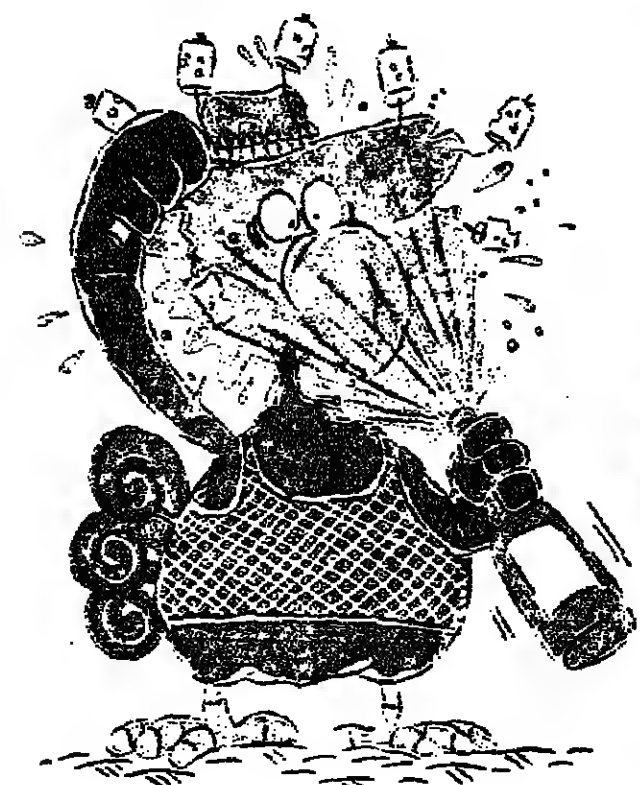
It was reported that investigators believe the girlfriend bought three weapons not long after her 18th birthday in November.

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Jeffrey Katzenberg flanked by David Geffen (left) and Steven Spielberg, founders of DreamWorks, which Mr Katzenberg left Disney to join AP

Bitter enemies battle over Disney bonus deal

THE GLOVES have come off and the prize fight has begun. Michael Eisner and Jeffrey Katzenberg, two of Hollywood's bitterest, most powerful enemies, began slugging out their differences in open court yesterday, turning a long-running contract dispute into a personal slanging match that risks exposing low intrigue and perverted ambition at the heart of the Walt Disney Company.

Mr Katzenberg, who now runs the new studio DreamWorks with his friends Steven Spielberg and David Geffen, is suing Disney for at least \$250m (£156m), arguing that the company deliberately tried to cheat him out of a lucrative bonus deal after he stepped down as its studio head in 1994.

Mr Eisner, Disney's chief executive officer, has conceded

BY ANDREW GUMBEL
in Los Angeles

that the company owes Mr Katzenberg something but appears determined to fight him down to the last dime rather than admit defeat.

And that is just the polite version of their relationship, which has soured so badly that each can barely stand to mention the other in public.

In his opening remarks on Monday, Mr Katzenberg's lawyer, Bert Fields, accused Mr Eisner of seeking to punish his former studio head out of "personal animosity". He said Mr Eisner and two of his Disney colleagues had conspired to cheat Mr Katzenberg out of a 2 per cent cut of the profit on all projects he had originated, and even nick-

named their plan Operation Snowball.

"Each story [the three Disney executives] told is patently untrue. I don't say that lightly," Mr Fields charged.

On the other side, Disney's lawyer, Louis Meisinger, accused Mr Katzenberg of hogging the credit for successful projects, failing to treat Roy Disney, son of the legendary Walt, with due respect, and attempting to portray himself as a victim when in fact he had received \$100m in compensation in his 10 years with the company, including bonuses, stock options and a \$5m beach house.

Mr Katzenberg set "a new standard for arrogance in an industry that already has a high mark in this area," Mr Meisinger said.

The public vilifications were expected to intensify yesterday as Mr Katzenberg took the stand. He appears hell-bent on throwing Mr Eisner every punch he has, on the basis that the more he can embarrass Disney the faster he will clinch a settlement.

The public airing of the court cases is a victory for Mr Katzenberg. Mr Eisner battled long and hard to keep the media out, and is still doing his best to withhold court documents from the public record.

Once, Mr Eisner was best friends with Mr Katzenberg and personally lured him to Disney in 1984. Mr Katzenberg rapidly turned an anaemic film division into a roaring success, reviving the moribund animation division to produce such hits as *The Lion King*, *Beauty*

and *the Beast*, *Aladdin*, and more.

The Disney board were reluctant, however, to award Mr Katzenberg a lucrative stock-option deal because they had already given as much as they could afford to Mr Eisner and his number two, Frank Wells. The 2 per cent bonus deal was seen as the next best thing, a potentially enormous benefit since it applied to the revenue of Disney products - films, videos and toys - in perpetuity.

The rift came in 1994, when Mr Eisner refused to promote Mr Katzenberg to the number two slot, vacated after Frank Wells died in an accident. Mr Katzenberg cut his contract short to join DreamWorks - a gesture Disney interpreted as a forfeit on his bonus. They have been arguing about it ever since.

Literary lions praise Chandler's grim city

AMERICAN TIMES
LOS ANGELES

THINK LITERATURE, and chances are you won't think Los Angeles. The Chicago of Saul Bellow, yes; the New England of Updike and Irving, certainly. But isn't LA the city of superficial, semi-literate airheads too dumb and too mercenary to take their eyes off the movies long enough to actually read anything?

That, give or take an idle prejudice, has certainly been the prevailing view of the New York literary mafia for as long as anyone can remember. In Los Angeles, novels are what unemployed screenwriters write to pass the time, not serious artistic endeavours, according to the East Coast literati. LA might be good for genre fiction, such as crime or noir or expositions of the Hollywood system, but it doesn't produce Literature with a capital L.

That perception might explain why a certain defensiveness surrounded Los Angeles's literary finest as they gathered for a two-day Festival of Books at the University of California last weekend. The *LA Times*, one of the sponsors of the event, even held a forum entitled "LA Lit - Does it Exist?" One of the more waggish featured authors, the film writer Eric Lax, named the Thomas Bros *Road Atlas and Travel Guide* (the LA equivalent of the London A-Z) as one of his favourite books about the city - the sort of choice Salman Rushdie might interpret as a compliment, but anyone else would surely call game, set and match to the East Coast scoffers.

But that was where all self-doubt ended. The assembled company was an extraordinarily rich, if under-appreciated group of writers, representing stylish noir (Walter Mosley), compelling non-fiction reportage (Norman Klein, DJ Waldie, Mike Davis), rugged street poetry (John Rechy) and a new wave of migrant literature (Hector

Tobar and Marisela Norte). They championed Los Angeles's literary voice with vigour and passion, pointing out that if editors from the big New York publishing houses found their city superficial it was just a reflection of their inability to use their own eyes.

"Like most visitors to a strange place, New York editors (with a few noteworthy exceptions) tend to gravitate toward that which is familiar and comforting to them - ie the Westside, where all the Eastern expatriates live," said Hector Tobar, whose debut novel *The Tattooed Soldier*, published last year, is a gripping



Chandler: A pillar of American letters

tale of the horrors of the Guatemalan civil war spilling over into the melting pot of southern California during the 1930s. "These days, we Los Angeles readers get a steady diet of their Catskills, their Brooklyn and their Bronx. But how much do they really know about our Pacoima, our Crenshaw District, our vast and varied Eastside?"

Since the big Los Angeles population boom early in the century, the city has been a fascinating inspiration for dark, near-apocalyptic literature that focuses on the corruption and swirling incongruities of the sprawling metropolis itself. Noir was virtually invented here, a genre that started out as pulp

but has come to be recognised - at least when it comes to Chandler, James M. Cain, Ross McDonald and James Ellroy - as a crucial pillar of American letters. Then there are the great Hollywood novels (Nathaniel West's *Day of the Locust*, Budd Schulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run?*, Scott Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon*), the expatriate novels (think of Aldous Huxley and Christopher Isherwood) and the novels that don't seem to be about LA, but are - Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles*, say, or *The Wizard of Oz*, both of which are allegories of Midwesterners uprooting and heading for the coast.

These days, with the glittery stylishness of a Chandler or a Juan Didion being superseded by darker, more marginal perspectives on the city, the LA canon is being reconsidered. Resurrected authors include John Fante, a true poet maudlin who was Charles Bukowski's literary mentor; the black noir writer Chester Himes (especially *If He Hollers Let Him Go*), and John Rechy, author of the extraordinary homosexual drifter novel *City of Night*.

The LA of these books could not be further from the beautiful people and ditsy superficiality of the Westside. Novels like Tobar's *Tattooed Soldier* combine Chandleresque back-street poetry with the gritty experience that comes of immigration from desperate corners of the earth.

Los Angeles is remarkably good at throwing up little nuggets of poetic insight into itself. The Eastside poet Marisela Norte described seeing posters of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Cesar Chavez, the Californian farm-workers' leader, on a wall in a poor neighbourhood. A Mexican *tacqueria* opposite responded with the slogan: "One cando, One people. One taco." Now that's poetry.

ANDREW GUMBEL

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Vernon Coleman

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BUSINESS

BSkyB chief quits to run Internet venture

BY MICHAEL HARRISON
Business Editor



Mark Booth, BSkyB chief executive, who will head News Corporation's interactive TV and Internet venture

RUPERT MURDOCH'S satellite broadcasting company BSkyB stunned the market yesterday by announcing that Mark Booth is quitting as chief executive to head up a new interactive television and Internet venture funded by News Corporation.

The new company, e-partners, will receive \$30m of equity funding from Mr Murdoch's News Corp and Mr Booth will have a significant stake in the venture. Mr Booth was offered the newly-created post to prevent him from leaving the Murdoch empire to take up a top job with Microsoft.

E-partners will have offices in London and Silicon Valley and will be used as the vehicle for News Corp to take strategic minority stakes in Internet, interactive television and wireless communication ventures.

BSkyB executives denied that the posting was a sideways move or that Mr Murdoch was penalising Mr Booth for the blocking of BSkyB's takeover bid for Manchester United.

Announcing Mr Booth's departure, Mr Murdoch paid him fulsome tribute praising the "outstanding job" he had done at BSkyB since taking up the position 18 months ago. Mr Booth led the launch of BSkyB's digital satellite service, which has already picked up 350,000 subscribers and is on course for one million by this October.

Analysts were relieved that Mr Booth is not being succeeded by Mr Murdoch's daughter, Elizabeth, who is managing director of BSkyB's programming arm, Sky Networks.

"I thought for one moment

they were going to put the boss's daughter in charge, which would not have been very well received," said one analyst.

The new company will effectively act as a venture capital fund, providing finance for new media companies. It may also help provide content for BSkyB and BSB, the interactive television service that BSkyB is launching later this year with BT, HSBC Holdings and Matsushita.

News Corp said that e-partners would be separate from its main Internet operating division, News America Digital Publishing. Although Mr Mur-

doch has been critical of the Internet craze, saying web-based stocks are overvalued and that Internet businesses will destroy more jobs than they create, News Corp has been steadily building a presence in the market.

News Corp has a big equity stake in TV Guide Inc, the leading interactive television channel and magazine, and two prominent websites, FoxNews.com and FoxSports.com. It is also active in the market for broadband services through partnerships with the At Home and Road-runner cable modem services.

Analysts questioned the effect

Mr Booth's move would have on Mr Murdoch's son, James, who looks after the empire's Internet-related businesses. Mr Murdoch said that, in e-partners, News Corp had created a unique entrepreneurial investment structure best able to exploit the opportunities in new media.

Mr Booth's successor will be chosen by a four-man committee made up of Mr Murdoch, the BSkyB chairman, Jérôme Seydoux, and two of its non-executive directors Sir Dennis Stevenson and Philip Bowman.

A spokesman said: "This is a plum job and the market is limited so the company has

one or two candidates in mind." Possible successors include David Elstein, the head of Channel Five, who was a former BSkyB executive, and David Chance, who quit BSkyB when its previous chief executive Sam Chisholm left the company.

Mathew Horsman, media analyst with Investec Henderson Crosthwaite, contrasted Mr Booth's departure with that of Mr Chisholm, which had unsettled the BSkyB share price. "It gives him a slice of the equity in a new venture and enables Murdoch to keep Booth working for him, not against him," he said.

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Upbeat forecast powers FTSE to new high

BY LEA PATERSON

LONDON SHARES powered to new highs again yesterday, with investors cheered both by record gains on Wall Street and an improving outlook for the UK economy.

Telecom and technology stocks led the market's charge, with the FTSE 100 index breaking through the 6,600 barrier to set a new intra-day high of 6,635.9. Profit-taking took the FTSE lower in the late afternoon, although the index still managed to set a new record close of 6,583.8, up 90 points.

Monday's record close for the Nasdaq, the US high-tech index, helped push UK technology shares higher. Meanwhile, telecom companies were given a lift by Monday's £2.8bn acquisition of a US Internet switching company by the UK company GEC.

A strong set of results from telecoms group AT&T helped take the Dow Jones index into record territory by lunchtime.

New evidence from the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) of an unexpectedly large jump in business confidence added to the bullish sentiment on the UK stock market.

The CBI said that manufacturing confidence jumped from minus 40 per cent in January to minus 6 per cent in April, its highest level since early last year. The UK should now escape recession by a "hair's breadth", according to the CBI, which is shortly expected to revise upwards its growth forecast.

Despite signs of increasing confidence, Andrew Buxton, chairman of the CBI economic

affairs committee, urged the Bank of England to shave another 0.25 points from interest rates in order to underpin the recovery. The CBI said the overall state of the UK economy remained fragile, particularly in manufacturing, which had been shedding jobs at the fastest rate in six years.

In the first four months of 1999, 52 per cent of manufacturers cut jobs, while only 10 per cent created jobs. This gives a net balance of minus 42 per cent, the lowest figure reported since January 1993. Manufacturing prices continued to fall sharply, with unit costs falling at the fastest rate ever recorded.

Separate figures from the Office for National Statistics revealed that the UK's global trade deficit on goods narrowed by £120m in February to £2.6bn.

Preliminary figures for March showed an improvement in the deficit with countries outside the EU, with the goods deficit narrowing to a smaller-than-expected £986m.

But although the global deficit narrowed in February, the deficit on goods traded within the EU widened to a nine-year high of £1bn.

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Stevenson takes Egg closes door to new telephone customers

BY ANDREW VERITY
AND ANDREW GARFIELD

SIR DENNIS STEVENSON, the former Blue Arrow whistle-blower and chairman of Pearson, the media group, was yesterday named as the next chairman of Halifax, Britain's biggest mortgage lender, writes Andrew Garfield.

Sir Dennis, 53, takes over the post at the end of July when Jon Foulds, the former 3i chief executive who steered the Halifax to flotation, retires at the age of 67.

Mr Foulds, who has known Sir Dennis for years, first approached him about the position last year. He said that the Halifax was fortunate to have found someone of Sir Dennis's calibre to take on the role.

"He is pretty well-known as a strategic thinker. But also a doer. I don't need to wish him

luck because he is the kind of person who will make his own luck," he said.

Apart from a much-needed holiday, Mr Foulds says that he has no firm plans about what to do with his new-found free time.

Sir Dennis, whose high-flying career has straddled both the public and private sectors and the arts, said he has a high regard for Jim Crosby, the Halifax chief executive whom he knows from the time when both were on the board of J Rothschild Assurance.

Recently, Sir Dennis stepped down as chairman of the Trustees of the Tate Gallery. He has promised to cut down on his "non-core" activities to give him more time to devote to his new role.

EGG, the Prudential's direct banking arm, has closed its doors to telephone customers after just six months in operation, declaring it will only accept new savings customers if they apply over the Internet.

The bank said it had already achieved its targets for a five-year business plan, attracting £5bn and 500,000 customers by offering market-beating rates of interest.

Mike Harris, the chief executive of Egg, said the bank would try to steal a march on the Internet banking market, aiming to attract 2 million customers by 2004.

Egg has attracted huge volumes of business by offering uncompetitive interest rates above its rivals - currently 6 per cent on savings accounts. The

rates entail heavy losses for its parent company, the Prudential.

Mr Harris said the need to stem losses - estimated to reach £170m this year - was a factor in the decision.

"The decision we were faced with was - do we continue to invest in telephone commerce and build a new call centre at a cost of £50m, when everything's moving to the Internet? In three years we think it will be as ubiquitous as the telephone," he said.

He added that the running cost of an Internet bank account is four times lower than by telephone. Mortgages and personal loans will still be available

from Egg by telephone.

The aggressive move is in sharp contrast to the strategy of Abbey National, the mortgage bank, which yesterday said it was turning its back on Internet banking.

Andrew Pople, head of retail banking at Abbey National, said: "We do not see [the Internet] as something that will dominate for the next two to three years. As a way of getting new customers I don't think the human being could be better."

Mr Pople described the Internet as an unpleasant buying experience inappropriate for financial products.

"The Internet is long-winded to get through, the sites are over-complicated and the choices are bewildering," he

Ailing Acorn agrees to £270m US takeover

BY NIGEL COPE

ACORN, the loss-making technology group, bowed to investors' wishes yesterday when it agreed to a £270m takeover bid from US investment bank Morgan Stanley Dean Witter.

The deal releases the value of Acorn's 24 per cent stake in ARM Holdings, the highly successful microchip maker whose shares have soared since coming to the market a year ago.

Investors had been pushing for a deal as Acorn's stock

market value had been less than the value of its stake in ARM, which it spun off into a separate entity in 1990.

Under the terms of the deal, Acorn shareholders will receive two shares in ARM for every five Acorn shares held. The deal values Acorn shares at 279p, a 14 per cent premium to their previous closing price.

The takeover has already

secured the agreement of shareholders accounting for more than 50 per cent of the equity. These include Dr Herrmann Hauser, one of the founders of the original Acorn computer company. His stake in ARM will be worth around £7.5m.

In two separate deals, Acorn is also selling its fledgling digital television set-top box business to Pace Micro Technology for £200,000. It is also in talks to sell its software development

business to Stan Bolland, Acorn's chief executive. Acorn said it would have been unable to fund the development required to move the two businesses forward.

Acorn said it believed the Morgan Stanley deal was the "best available solution" for shareholders. The company has been struggling badly and last year recorded an operating loss of £10m on sales of £11m. Its only profits came from the

sale of shares in ARM and its share of ARM's profits.

"I am delighted we have been able to generate a value-enhancing solution that enables Acorn shareholders to participate directly in ARM's extraordinary success," said Gordon Owen, the Acorn chairman.

Acorn shares closed 9.5p higher at 254.5p, compared to their low point of just 57p in November. ARM closed 22.5p higher at 695.5p.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

LONDON BLUE-CHIPS soared to an all-time high yesterday, boosted by a buoyant performance on Wall Street and a shortage in many leading stocks.

The FTSE 100 closed 90 points higher at 6,583.8 after setting an intra-day high of 6,635.9 in the early afternoon.

The FTSE 250 was more subdued, finishing 20.1 up at 5,808.7, while the Small Cap set another 1999 record, ending 8.5 higher at 2,542.4.

Market Report, page 19

NEW YORK

THE DOW JONES stormed into record territory once again as gains by blue-chip stocks drove the 30-stock average ahead of the rest of the US stock market.

The Dow was up 57 points, or half a percentage point, at 10,778 at midday. But technology stocks were lower as a nervous market awaited the publication of America Online's earnings report. A trader said: "It's good to see that the movement into cyclical stocks a week ago was not just a short-term blip."

The Nikkei 225 succumbed to profit-taking sales in high tech, international blue chips and telecommunications stocks as investors looked in gains ahead of Japanese Golden Week holidays which began later this week. Shares were helped by stability in the dollar-yen rate following an uneventful G7 meeting on Monday.

TOKYO

TOKYO STOCKS inched up to their highest point for 1999 but failed to break the psychologically important 17,000 mark closing up 38.78 points at 16,957.27.

The Nikkei 225 succumbed to profit-taking sales in high tech, international blue chips and telecommunications stocks as investors looked in gains ahead of Japanese Golden Week holidays which began later this week. Shares were helped by stability in the dollar-yen rate following an uneventful G7 meeting on Monday.

The Hang Seng finished up 237.77 points, or 1.81 per cent, at 13,364.79 after hitting a high of 13,408.99 points.

One analyst said: "As long as the Nasdaq is strong this will continue, but if there's a correction it will cool down."

HONG KONG

STOCKS closed with firm gains as technology-related stocks drew strength from an overnight record on the Nasdaq and investors searched for laggards following the market's rally to 18-month highs.

The Hang Seng finished up 237.77 points, or 1.81 per cent, at 13,364.79 after hitting a high of 13,408.99 points.

One analyst said: "As long as the Nasdaq is strong this will continue, but if there's a correction it will cool down."

FRANKFURT

GERMANY'S ELECTRONIC Xetra DAX index climbed almost 2 per cent, spurred by a strong start on Wall Street and gains in some of Frankfurt's most heavily traded stocks. The index closed up 1.82 per cent - 95.69 points - at 5,364.81, driven higher by gains in Deutsche Bank and Deutsche Telekom.

Deutsche Bank, the session's most traded stock, rose 4.94 per cent to 53.95 euros while Dresdner Bank shares also rose 7.09 per cent amid speculation the group could make a US acquisition.

BRIEFING

Inside BUSINESS REVIEW today

- New lease of life: The man who brought hope to London futures
- Welsh wizard has Sony under his spell
- How Lara Croft made a man of Charles Cornwall
- The brewer's brewer

PLUS Hamish McRae, Diane Coyle, Derek Pain, Jonathan Davis and The Trader

First free Net service in France

KINGFISHER, the Woolworths and B&Q retail group, is linking up with the French entrepreneur and LVMH chairman Bernard Arnault to offer the first free Internet access service in France.

In an attempt to mimic the success of Dixons' Freeserve service in the UK, Kingfisher will offer free Internet access discs through its 137-strong chain of Darty electrical stores in France.

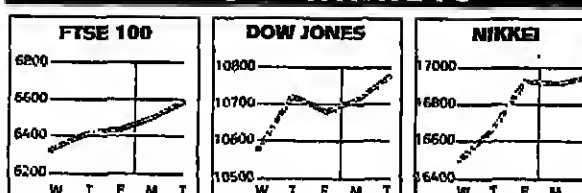
Subscribers to the Libertsurf service will be able to buy goods from Darty and Kingfisher's Castorama DIY chain. Group Arnault, the family holding company of Mr Arnault, will provide offers on luxury goods brands such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel. Only 4 per cent of French households are connected to the Internet, compared with 12 per cent in the UK. Kingfisher shares rose 5 per cent to 882p.

Amazon in £390m expansion

AMAZON.COM, the rapidly growing Internet bookseller, is paying £390m for three Internet companies including Exchange.com, a site for rare books and music.

Separately, yesterday Amazon launched a free greeting card service that is expected to boost the number of visitors to its site. Amazon.com Cards offers more than 800 types of cards free.

STOCK MARKETS

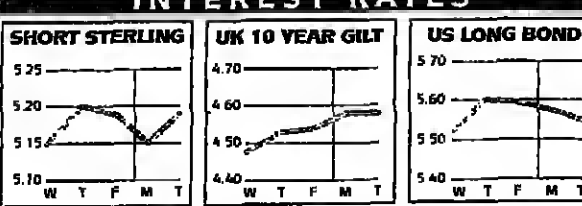


Source: Reuters and graph at 5pm

INDICES

Index	Close	Change	% Chg	52 wk High	52 wk Low
FTSE 100	6583.80	90.00	1.38	6539.90	4590.20
FTSE 250	5808.70	20.10	0.35	5870.50	4247.80
FTSE 350	3138.00	37.90	1.22	3110.80	2210.40
FTSE All Share	3039.21	35.49	1.18	3010.25	2143.53
FTSE SmallCap	2542.40	8.50	0.34	2793.80	1834.40
FTSE Phileas	1383.70	6.30	0.46	1817.10	1046.20
FTSE AIM	937.80	8.50	0.92	1146.90	761.30
FTSE Europe 100	3084.08	49.41	1.64	3078.27	2016.15
FTSE Europe 300	1327.70	20.16	1.54	1329.07	880.63
Dow Jones	10778.59	57.00	0.53	10755.74	7400.30
Nikkei	16957.27	38.78	0.23	17166.06	12787.90
Hang Seng	13364.79	237.77	1.81	13364.42	6544.79
Dax	5347.50	91.28	1.74	6217.83	3893.71
S&P 500	1358.26	-0.61	-0.05	1363.70	923.32
Nasdaq	2612.45	-39.95	-1.51	2661.51	1357.09
Toronto 300	7848.00	-3.58	-0.06	7929.00	5340.90
Brazil Bovespa	10750.50	-89.40	-0.84	11626.67	4575.69
Belgium Bel20	3257.86	13.19	0.41	3713.21	2696.26
Amsterdam AEX	574.41	8.63	1.53	600.65	366.58
France CAC 40	4390.92	106.92	2.49	4416.00	2881.21
Milan MIB30	36915.00	743.00	2.05	39170.00	24175.00
Madrid IEX35	10069.80	162.70	1.64	10989.80	6869.90
Irish Overall	5315.51	17.06	0.32	5454.25	3732.57
S Korea Comp	793.98	17.68	2.28	780.73	277.37
Australia ASX	3145.20	13.50	0.43	3134.50	2368.70

INTEREST RATES



Source: Reuters and graph at 5pm

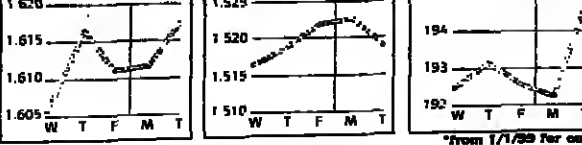
MONEY MARKET RATES

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	5 year	10 year
UK	5.33	-2.17	5.37	-2.07	5.58
US	5.00	-0.69	5.27	-0.64	5.21
Japan	0.14	-0.48	0.20	-0.45	1.42
Germany	2.59	-1.06	2.67	-1.26	3.85

BOND YIELDS

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	5 year	10 year
UK	5.33	-2.17	5.37	-2.07	5.58
US	5.00	-0.69	5.27	-0.64	5.21
Japan	0.14	-0.48	0.20	-0.45	1.42
Germany	2.59	-1.06	2.67	-1.26	3.85

CURRENCIES



Source: Reuters and graph at 5pm

POUND

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	5 year	10 year
Dollar	1.6174	+0.066	1.6244	0.6183	-0.359
Euro	1.5187	-0.235	1.4079	0.9389	-1.195
Yen	194.71	+22.51	221.31	120.32	+90.97
£ Index	104.10	-0.10	105.00	108.60	+0.10

DOLLAR

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	5 year	10 year
Dollar	1.6174	+0.066	1.6244	0.6183	-0.359
Euro	1.5187	-0.235	1.4079	0.9389	-1.195
Yen	194.71	+22.51	221.31	120.32	+90.97
£ Index	104.10	-0.10	105.00	108.60	+0.10

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	5 year	10 year
Brent Oil (\$)	19.83	0.00	13.71	115.40	3.00
Gold (\$)	282.55	1.25	308.65	164.10	2.10
Silver (\$)	5.10	-0.05	6.22	5.25	7.25

Source: Bloomberg

TOURIST RATES

Australia (\$)	2.4078	Mexican (nuevo peso)	13.63
Austria (schillings)	20.20	Netherlands (guldens)	3.2366
Belgium (francs)	59.39	New Zealand (\$)	2.8223
Canada (\$)	2.3187	Norway (kroner)	12.25
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8481	Portugal (escudos)	203.48
Denmark (krones)	11.00	Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.8759
Finland (markka)	4.7724	Singapore (\$)	2.6077
France (francs)	9.6553	South Africa (francs)	9.4306
Germany (marks)	2.7880	Spain (pesetas)	244.39
Greece (drachma)	4.4966	Sweden (kronor)	1.1911
Hong Kong (\$)	12.11	Switzerland (francs)	2.3695
Ireland (pounds)	1.1565	Thailand (bahts)	55.21
India (rupees)	62.06	Turkey (liras)	6022.58
Indonesia (rupes)	6.0318	USA (\$)	1.5754
Israel (shekels)	2.8860		
Italy (lire)	188.89		
Japan (yen)	5.8460		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.0233		
Malta (lira)			

Notes for Indication purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

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Notice to
Trustees

Murdoch caught by the Internet bug

AS IS usually the case in the less than transparent world of Rupert Murdoch's business affairs, we may never know the full story of Mark Booth's abrupt departure as chief executive of BSkyB. However, there are a number of reasons for thinking the official version - that he is off to spearhead Mr Murdoch's assault on the Internet - may be reasonably close to the truth.

Mr Murdoch has three good reasons for feeling less than happy with Mr Booth. He's already blamed Mr Booth's predecessor, Sam Chisholm, for Sky's failure to obtain regulatory approval for its Manchester United takeover; the way Mr Murdoch sees it, Mr Chisholm's combative style rubbed the regulators so much up the wrong way that they were bound to be poisoned against Sky. But Mr Booth was the man who fronted the bid and Sky's fruitless attempt to get it past the MMC, so he cannot be seen as entirely blameless.

Another is the less than spectacular launch of Sky Digital. Off to a slow and plodding start, Sky has failed to deliver the early knock-out blow to ONdigital Mr Murdoch hoped for. And a third is Sky's failure to gain any kind of a foothold in continental pay TV. In truth, this lat-



OUTLOOK

ter setback may have more to do with Mr Murdoch himself than Mr Booth, but a good boss never blames himself, does he.

For all of these reasons, Mr Murdoch might have thought the time right for a replacement. All the same, this doesn't appear to be a Murdoch axing in the old style. What is interesting about this changeover is that the choice of successor is not to be Mr Murdoch's alone, or that's the spin Sky is giving to the whole thing, anyway. As far as we know, this is the first time independent directors have had any kind of a proper say in the future of Sky's management, which hitherto has been run as if a wholly-owned

subsidiary of Mr Murdoch's News Corp.

Furthermore, Mr Booth isn't leaving the Murdoch fold. As many former Murdoch executives can testify, it is usual practice in the Murdoch empire to be shifted into some sort of departure lounge job before being exited entirely, and that may indeed be Mr Booth's eventual fate. Even so, it does seem genuinely to have been the case that Mr Booth received an offer from Bill Gates at Microsoft, and Mr Murdoch made an effort to keep him by constructing a similar post within his own company.

That effort, moreover, seems to be coming at a high price. Even for Mr Murdoch, \$300m of risk equity is hardly chicken-feed, and the Silicon Valley venture capital market, which seems to be where Mr Booth and the money are heading, is already an overcrowded one. Mr Murdoch's interest in the Net is quite a specialist one - interactive digital TV - but even so, he's late into the game. He's also on record as saying Internet companies are hugely overvalued and that the web will end up destroying more companies than it creates.

Which possibly explains why Mr Murdoch has to play the Internet

game, however expensive it proves in the short run. Any company with global media pretensions going forward has to have a stake in the Internet, for defensive reasons if no other. The Internet is not just an alternative means of distribution, it also threatens to gobble up a very significant share of worldwide advertising revenues. Whether Mr Booth was pushed or jumped, Mr Murdoch certainly needs somebody to bolster its Internet ambitions.

Economic blues

AMID ALL the talk of an economic upswing, it's easy to overlook the fact that British manufacturing is continuing to shrink at an alarming rate of knots.

As yesterday's CBI survey showed, over the first four months of 1999, manufacturing jobs were disappearing at their fastest rate for six years. Things don't look too much better going forward - manufacturers expect to continue shedding jobs over the next four months, albeit at a marginally slower pace.

Taken as whole, manufacturing now accounts for just 20 per cent of UK output, compared with 25 per

cent at the beginning of the decade. And looking ahead, there is little reason to expect any reversal of the sector's well-established decline.

What does all this mean for policy? Clearly, the smaller the manufacturing sector becomes, the less able it is to exert influence - either directly or indirectly - over the level of interest and exchange rates.

In this sense, the decline of UK manufacturing has become a vicious downward spiral. Interest rate policy in this country is largely determined by our relatively large, and relatively buoyant, services sector. Manufacturers have for many months been stuck with an interest rate - and with an exchange rate - that is far too high for their own good and is primarily intended to curb a services boom.

The Bank of England's interest rate stance has merely served to catalyse the pace of manufacturing decline, and, in turn, to diminish further manufacturers' influence over policy.

Given that manufacturing is in the main - although not entirely - based in the north, and that services - in particular Britain's rapidly growing financial services sector - tend to be based in the south, the effect of all

this will be to widen the north-south divide.

Eddie George, the Bank of England governor, strongly maintains that he was misquoted by a northern regional newspaper which reported him as saying that northern jobs were a price worth paying for keeping inflation down in the south.

Unfortunately, that is the truth of how the Bank of England interest rate policy works. Indeed, if the Bank is to meet successfully the Government's inflation target, it is the only way its interest rate policy can work. If Eddie George thinks he gets flak from manufacturers in the North-east now, he should just give it a year or two.

Sir Dennis again

MR SCHMOOZER has done it again. Often described as the Renaissance man of business, Sir Dennis Stevenson has picked up another chairmanship, and like the last one, Pearson, this one's a biggie - Halifax. No-one really knows if Sir Dennis is any good, he's never really managed anything, but one thing is for sure, he certainly gets around. Sir Dennis is the archetype of that

modern breed of person who deliberately divides his time between a large number of jobs, which is nice work if you can get it. Besides the chairmanship of Pearson, he's also chairman of BSkyB, where he has been charged with finding a replacement for Mark Booth, Manpower, Lazard, the Economist, St James' Place Capital and sometime adviser to the Prime Minister, Tony Blair. With that lot already on the books, it is not clear what time he'll have left for Halifax.

It is arguably a good thing for a chairman to have a broad spread of interests and expertise, and no-one can quarrel with the performance of Pearson since he took the chair. But a portfolio of this size may be stretching the point a little too far. Halifax shares have had a good run of late, bouncing back to close to their all time high. The company is solid, big, sturdy and in most respects runs itself. It doesn't seem to require a hands-on chairman, so in this respect, Sir Dennis could be perfect for the job. But with its core business - mortgages - mature and declining, it possibly does need a visionary. Is Sir Dennis that man? We'll see.

IMF faces fresh pressure for internal reform

FRESH PRESSURE for internal reform of the International Monetary Fund has built up at this week's meetings of the Fund and the World Bank in Washington.

The spring cleaning could result in the departure of Michel Camdessus as managing director of the IMF before its annual meetings at the end of September.

The meeting of the Fund's Interim Committee - in effect its supervisory board - also expressed concern about the state of the world economy.

Robert Rubin, the US Treasury Secretary, said: "Serious challenges remain and I believe the balance of risks for the global economy remain on the downside."

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, said that although some earlier worries had not materialised, there was a "workmanlike" approach to the challenges.

The Interim Committee discussed proposals for its own restructuring yesterday. Although there is no consensus about specific measures yet, the reforms will make the IMF more accountable to a broader range

BY DIANE COYLE
in Washington

of member countries, especially the developing countries.

It has already been agreed that in future the president of the World Bank will attend IMF Interim Committee meetings. Other measures that will give the committee, currently not much more than a talking shop on the international scene, greater influence over Fund decisions are likely.

The dissatisfaction with the Fund's handling of the world financial and economic crisis over the past two years was reflected in the communiqué issued by the Group of 24, a grouping of developing nations.

It urged greater flexibility in IMF policy prescriptions and emphasised "the need for developing countries to have an equitable representation" in the process of crisis management.

Ministers from the emerging economies have also expressed concern about the pressure on them to publish IMF assessments of their economies. The need for greater transparency is at the core of the G7's pro-

posals for international reform, but the G24 warned: "Publication of Fund staff surveillance reports is likely to compromise the quality and candour of discussions with member countries."

The reports could help trigger crises if they moved the financial markets adversely. At the very least, the IMF will have to improve its own record on transparency and accountability, as its senior echelons acknowledge.

Mr Brown reaffirmed the importance of greater transparency. In his remarks to the Interim Committee he also said growth in the UK would be slower this year than last but would strengthen in 2000.

Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the EU's monetary affairs commissioner, said the euro's depreciation against the dollar had been "relatively modest" and the result of slower growth, adding, "even if there is room for an appreciation of the euro".

Kiichi Miyazawa, Japan's finance minister, defended his government's economic policy, saying it was responding "forcefully" to difficult conditions.



Alan Greenspan (left), chairman of the US Federal Reserve, and Robert Rubin, US Treasury Secretary, at the IMF meeting in Washington yesterday

Railtrack ousts Brown & Root from £2bn deal

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

"We are now at the delivery stage and we want to accelerate quickly and smoothly and get the thing built," she added.

Railtrack still has WCMC partnership agreements with Alstom, for signalling and train control systems, and with Balfour Beatty and Westinghouse for the remodelling at Euston.

B&R has worked with Railtrack since the rail infrastructure company was formed in 1994, when B&R led a consortium preparing the feasibility study for the modernisation programme.

Railtrack is committed to achieving 125mph running between London and Glasgow by 2002 and 140mph by 2005. If it misses the deadlines, it faces huge financial penalties from Virgin Trains, which is investing £2.5bn on 131 new trains.

Railtrack is also under pressure from the Rail Regulator to show that it can deliver major improvements to the network.

B&R was unavailable for comment but a spokesman told *New Civil Engineer* magazine: "There is nothing untoward, it is simply a reorganisation. It is part of the way big projects are run. They reorganise from time to time."

The company has split the scheme into two divisions, commercial and project delivery.

Lloyds TSB launches low-interest credit cards

LLOYDS TSB went on the offensive in the credit-card price war yesterday when it launched a range of cards with interest rates as low as 15.9 per cent APR, writes Andrew Verity.

The high street bank is abolishing annual fees on the new credit cards, called Asset, and

charging a maximum interest rate of 18.9 per cent APR. Rates fall to 15.9 per cent on balances over £1,000 and the cards carry benefits such as free warranties and travel insurance.

Lloyds TSB has seen its share of credit-card lending shrink from 17 to 15 per cent in

the past three years as US competitors have lured customers away with lower rates.

The move undercuts Barclaycard, the traditional market leader, which has also lost market share to US competitors. The American competition - with rates as low as 11 or 12 per cent

- includes MBNA, Capital One, Bank One, and a new entrant to the UK market, Provident.

Gerald Hawkins, managing director of card services at Lloyds TSB, said: "We are facing a situation where competition in the market has been explosive. The market is grow-

ing by over 20 per cent a year for three to four years."

Mark Austin, of RBS Advantage, criticised Lloyds TSB for leaving existing customers, who hold the Lloyds Bank Classic Reserve Card, stranded on a rate of 19.9 per cent - up to 4 points higher than the new rates.

Notice to TSB Trustcard and Trustcard Control Customers

TSB is changing its interest rates for TSB Trustcard and TSB Trustcard Control customers.

With effect from 1st May 1999 the interest rates on TSB Trustcard are as follows:

	MONTHLY RATE	APR (PURCHASES)	APR (CASH ADVANCES)
Outstanding Balance			
£1-£1,499	1.63%	21.4%	23.2%
£1,500-£2,999	1.60%	20.9%	22.8%
£3,000 or more*	1.38%	17.8%	19.6%
*This rate remains unchanged.			
Balance Transfer rates			
Amount Transferred			
£250-£1,499	0.94%	11.8%	13.5%
£1,500 and over	0.79%	9.9%	11.5%

With effect from 1st May 1999 the interest rates on TSB Trustcard Control are as follows:

	1.63%	21.4%	23.2%
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Part of the Lloyds TSB Group

TSB Bank plc, Registered Office: 71 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BS. Registered in England and Wales; No. 1083268

Diageo to sell off Cinzano

DIAGEO, the drinks group, yesterday put four of its European spirits brands up for sale in a move that could net more than £300m.

The brands include Cinzano, the high-profile vermouth that is number two in its category worldwide.

Also included in the proposed sale are Metaxa, the popular Greek spirit, Asbach brandy and Vecchia Romagna, Italy's best-selling brandy.

Diageo has instructed Warburg Dillon Read to draw up a memorandum for sale to see whether the disposal would be value enhancing for shareholders.

The four brands made an annual profits contribution of £60m after marketing and promotion. Some analysts say the sale could yield up to £350m.

"These four are low quality brands and a sale would complete the rationalisation of Diageo's spirits brands fol-

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

lowing the GrandMet-Guinness merger," one analyst said.

In a separate statement Diageo said its UDV spirits division will sell four brands of the Greek drinks maker Gruppo Campari for an undisclosed price.

The moves form part of UDV's strategy to focus its resources behind major growth brands such as Johnnie Walker and J&B scotch whiskies, Smirnoff vodka, Gordon's gin and Baileys liqueur, following deals in North America earlier this year.

Diageo shares closed 30p higher at 718.5p. The stock was boosted by one investment bank yesterday recommending investors to switch into Diageo from rival spirits group Allied Domecq, which reports results tomorrow.

Summary of Accounts

for the year ended 31 December 1998

	1998	1997		1998	1997
	£m	£m		£m	£m
Profit and Loss Account			Balance Sheet		
Turnover including share of			Fixed assets:		
Estuary Services Ltd	32.0	30.6	25.6	25.4	
Less: share of Estuary Services Ltd	(0.5)	(0.5)	Investments:		
PLA turnover	31.5	30.1	Port of London		
PLA operating expenditure	(32.0)	(29.0)	Properties Limited Group	6.0	9.0
PLA operating (loss)/profit	(0.5)	1.1	Stock redemption fund	10.2	9.6
Share of operating profit of			Estuary Services Ltd	0.2	0.2
Estuary Services Ltd	0.2	0.2		42.0	44.2
Operating (loss)/profit including			Net current assets	1.8	13.4
Estuary Services Ltd	(0.3)	1.3		43.8	57.6
Impairment of peers	(0.7)	-			
Profit on sale of investments	0.5	-	Creditors: Amounts falling		
14c interest	0.9	1.4	due after more than one year:		
Dividends receivable	8.1	8.8	Loans	-	10.2
Repayment of Government grants	(8.1)	(8.8)	Other amounts	1.9	2.7
Profit on ordinary			Reserves:		
activities before taxation	0.4	2.2	Revaluation	6.0	9.0
Taxation	(0.2)	(0.4)	Stock redemption fund	10.1	9.6
Profit for the year	0.2	1.8	Profit and loss	25.8	29.1
Transfer to stock redemption fund	(0.5)	(0.1)		43.8	57.6
Transfer to profit and loss account reserve	(0.3)	1.7	Cash Flow Statement		
			Increase/decrease in cash	5.4	(2.1)

SIR BRIAN SHAW
Chairman

O.J. JEFFERY
Chief Executive

G.P. ELLIS
Chief Financial Officer

Published by the Port of London Authority under Section 8(1) of the Port of London Act 1968

The above is an extract from the published Accounts of the Port of London Authority for the year ended 31 December 1998 which have been delivered to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

COPIES OF THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 1998 CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT, PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY, DEVON HOUSE, 30-31 ST. KATHARINES WAY LONDON E14 4PU. £1.00 PER COPY

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'It takes a certain skill to have great Olympians in one decade and athletics in the hand of the receivers the next'

Pascoe faces biggest hurdle of all



THE BRIAN VINER INTERVIEW

IN A CERTAIN Sunday newspaper supplement listing the richest people in Britain, the name of Alan Pascoe popped up in joint 971st place. Pascoe - the former Commonwealth and European champion in the 400 metres hurdles, and Olympic silver medalist, who in 1975 was ranked world No 1 - is not used to coming joint 971st. But in this particular hurdle race - for what is business, or for that matter life, but a series of hurdles? - he reckons he did not even deserve to be on the track. The list valued him at £21m.

A considerable exaggeration, he insists. "I wonder whether I can take action to get hold of the balance between what I'm really worth and what they claim," he adds, amiably.

Still, even Pascoe would concede that he is a millionaire several times over, such has been the success of his various events promotions and marketing companies. The latest of them, Fast Track, born nearly a year ago, has been charged with the difficult task of giving British athletics back the spring in its step, following the financial collapse of the British Athletic Federation in October 1997. And the feeling in the sport - certainly the feeling of its Supreme Being, the chief executive of UK Athletics, David Moorcroft - is that, if anyone can do it, it is the formidably energetic and able Pascoe.

We meet at Fast Track's smart suite of offices overlooking Sloane Street in Knightsbridge. As I wait for Pascoe, I watch two or three women with poodles crossing the road. These are women who put on track suits only when they're planning to jump the queue at Harvey Nichols, confirming that Knightsbridge is a curious location for what in some respects has become the nerve centre of British athletics.

Pascoe arrives. His lanky frame has filled out somewhat since he retired from hurdling in 1978, but he is still a fit-looking 52. And he will need to be fit if he is to help Moorcroft rebuild athletics. A year ago, as he was preparing to launch Fast Track, he called several sports journalists he had known in his competing days.

"I was horrified by the extent to which they had written athletics off, largely because, however well we did overall, we failed to win any gold medals in the Atlanta Olympics or in the World Championships in Athens. It is true that athletics was at a very low ebb. It was basically structured on the Victorian concept of committees, and was not set up remotely as a business. Many of the events had lost their purpose and had become a fly-past for the athletes, who were receiving disproportionately large sums.

"But even so, by any criteria, athletics was still our most successful international sport. About 200 countries take part in the World Championships and any of them - Namibia,



Alan Pascoe, millionaire and former Olympic silver medalist, takes time out from reviving the financial fortunes of British athletics at his London office yesterday

Robert Hallam

Surinam, Sudan - can take away gold medals. There aren't many gold medals to go round. It is really tough to get them. But that message is never put across and I guess it's not a message people want to hear. We will do very well, I believe, to get one gold medal at the World Championships in Seville this summer. So the management of expectation is important."

Pascoe is keen on phrases like the "management of expectation", a reminder that he is, first and foremost, a marketing man. And like Sebastian Coe - whom he recently appointed chairman of Fast Track Events, the arm of the company responsible for staging Britain's seven televised athletics meetings - he hated contemplating the mire into which athletics had sunk. As Coe bluntly put it: "It takes a certain skill to have great Olympians in one decade and the sport in the hand of the receivers the next."

For Pascoe, the descent of the sport into administrative and fiscal chaos was particularly maddening as his company, API, had raised, over 10 years, some £30m in sponsorship. "We found a coaching sponsor, Post Office Counters, who put in a million a year, and wouldn't we love that now. But neither the governing body nor the coaches, who were the main beneficiaries, lifted a finger to make that sponsorship work. It was a typical example of the Victorian amateur approach to the sport. We are prepared to take the money, but don't expect us to do anything. It was like banging my head against a brick wall." After a 400 metre run up, to boot.

This time round, with Fast Track organising the meetings, Pascoe has a stronger grip on the product he is trying to sell. Yesterday, he announced a significant hike in the prize money available to athletes competing in Britain - nearly \$750,000 (£468,000) at the showpiece meeting on 7 August, with \$15,000 (£9,300) for winners. And he is already challenging conventions by reducing the number of simultaneous events, so that the long-jump, for instance, will no longer have to compete for the crowd's attention with the javelin and the pole vault.

"We are trying," he says, "to make it a one-ring circus. We are replacing the scratchy old PA systems. We are bringing in huge video screens, so that people will get the action-replays they expect if they are

watching on television. Before, with information on cardboard scoreboards, if people didn't know where to look, they had no idea what was going on. But at the indoor grand prix in Birmingham this year, we stopped all track events and focused on the women's triple-jump, which worked out as we hoped, because Ashia Hansen was trailing until the last round. The crowd was clapping and chanting. It was wonderful."

Hansen's leaps forward are as nothing, though, compared with what Pascoe is trying to do. And he looks enviously towards the impressive new Heysel stadium in Brussels, where crowds for athletics meetings top 40,000. "They have African drums beating during the long-distance races and they do it very well. I would love to have such

crowds and stadia here. On the other hand, when the javelin throwers came out after the European Championships in Budapest and Steve Backley threw 65 or 68 metres, only one person clapped out of 45,000. So Brussels is not a role model in every respect."

Besides, athletics meetings cannot be turned into *son et lumiere* spectacles by will alone. They need money. And last year there was very little of it. "We had a very weak TV deal with Channel 4 and the sport was run on a shoestring," says Pascoe.

As a result, the International Amateur Athletic Federation delivered the ultimate snub, downgrading events held in Britain, and recently restoring them to grand prix status only in response to a spirited campaign led by Pascoe, Moorcroft, David Hemery and Coe.

Pascoe was delighted, but not as delighted as he was last October, at the end of what he describes as one of the best weeks of his life. To the BBC's chagrin, Channel 4 had pinched the rights to Test cricket. The BBC badly needed to reinforce its commitment to British sport.

It was already planning to bid for the rights to televise athletics but, following the cricket episode, the deal - some four times as lucrative as the Channel 4 agreement - was hurried through. Bluntly, did BBC executives throw more money at athletics than they really wanted to, in order to hush back some desperately-needed credibility? Pascoe is diplomatic. "I like to think of it as a fair deal for the BBC, as

well as the right deal for the future of athletics," he says.

The BBC investment came as an enormous shot in the arm, if that is not too provocative an image in athletics. Pascoe is weary by the fuss over drugs. "Other sports, soccer and rugby league in particular, have more drugs positives," he says. "Athletics is singled out, yet no sport in Britain has the testing regime we have. Any athlete is liable to be tested at any time, anywhere. If they go abroad they have to leave an address. If they can't be contacted, they can be suspended. Many of us would see that as an imposition, civil liberties and all that sort of thing."

Towards the end of his own career, Pascoe became increasingly aware of the use of drugs. "But the feeling was that it was an Eastern bloc thing, and particularly that it was the high throwers. From the details that have been coming out of Eastern Europe, it's now clear that there was widespread usage, from very early on. Horrific. It is possible that someone could still prove that I should have been the gold rather than silver medalist at the European Championships in 1971, because I was beaten by an Eastern bloc runner, but I would hate to think that was the case. I'm grateful for what I have."

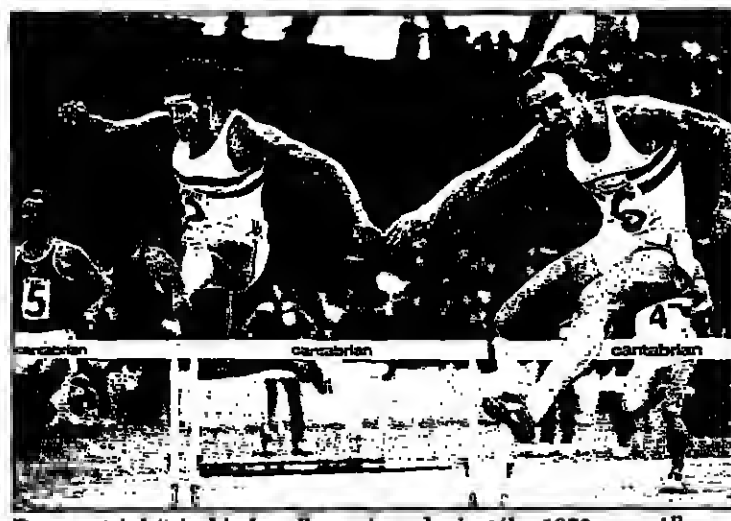
"On reflection, though, there was a harder I always beat as a junior. And he wasn't from Eastern Europe. He suddenly came out one season and was two yards faster. But I knew that nobody had trained harder than me that winter."

Asthmatic as a boy and, in his own word, uncoordinated, Pascoe overtook many more natural athletes in his quest for gold medals, and it is the same single-mindedness that has served him so well in business. Moreover, his hurdling career gives him a useful perspective on the sport, and he has no truck with the theory that the golden age has passed.

"I remember people saying: 'What will follow when Pascoe, Foster and Capes go?' And of course, what followed - Ovett, Coe and then Cram - was immeasurably better. Then when everyone was crying into their beer again, along came Sally Gunnell and Linford Christie. Now we have Jonathan Edwards, Steve Backley and Ashia Hansen and, at under-23 level, more depth than ever before."

With that depth, plus the strides made by Moorcroft in making athletics commercially viable, Pascoe believes that the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester could and should be a glittering showpiece. "I think it's very important for British sport. Until Euro 96, the two biggest events here were the World Student Games and the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh."

"Neither was a success. So the rest of sport has to show that it isn't just soccer that can put on big events. In 2003 we will hopefully have the world athletics championships, which is part of the drive for the 2006 soccer World Cup. By then we will be ready to make a serious Olympic bid. I just hope it happens in my time." As do we all.



Pascoe (right) in his hurdling prime during the 1970s

Allsport

Celebration has its place

Sir: The Independent contained a report (20 April) by Glenn Moore about England's bid to host the World Cup in 2006 in which he calls Sir Bobby Charlton's remark about wanting to run on the pitch after the Manchester United-Arsenal cup replay a *four pas*.

In the context of the bid, it may have been unwise, but I think it was an honest and valid expression of how we all felt. I listened to the match on radio and then watched the late-night highlights on terrestrial TV. I am a neutral to Tottenham supporter who admires the current Manchester United and Arsenal sides but I was completely caught up in the match. The newspapers the next day were full of it, especially Giggs' marvellous match-winning goal. Given that the match had generated so much excitement, it hardly seems wrong that the fans there wanted to show their feelings the way they did.

Sir Bobby's later comment that "we don't want to see fans on the pitch" may have been more politically correct, but it perpetuates the error that the fans are an unfortunate nuisance who need to be kept in their place. Their place seems to be at the turnstiles meekly shelling out their cash or in front of a TV screen providing a captive audience for advertisers.

Bobby Charlton's first comment expressed the feelings of all true lovers of the game. Celebration is an important part of any sport and more should be done to find ways to accommodate the natural expression of feelings after such powerful events.

STEPHEN FORES
Plaistow
London

Match United

Sir: The theory that the gap is now closed between the English and Italian football leagues because of Manchester United's exploits in Europe surely requires more English teams to prove it. The rest of the Premiership are years behind Manchester United when it comes to seeking top European honours and only United have the measure of the best Italian sides.

It's no coincidence that Italian teams feature in two of the European finals with the others all reaching the latter stages of their respective European competitions. Bar Manchester United, it seems there are a different set of English clubs venturing into Europe every season and getting knocked out.

As novices, they end up either feeling their way around or attacking with naive bravado. United, however, with their valuable travelling experience and a squad which is large enough and talented enough to cope with crises, have evolved to be able to impose their tenacious and refreshingly hungry brand of play on opponents who come expecting a game of chess-like football.

However the absurd number of games in which players are expected to perform in this country will have to be cut severely if they are to maintain the fitness and relish for the game that is essential for competing in Europe.

ALAN GLYNN
Finchley
London

Give it a rest

Sir: And the whingeing goes on! Am I alone in finding it incomprehensible that Manchester United, with a minimum of 18 international players, find playing nine games in 36 days as being too much.

Turning the clock back 10 years, Liverpool played eight games in 26 days post Hillsborough in the days when squads were limited and each player had experienced the trauma of attending several funerals. It was little wonder that Arsenal went on to win the title, and they were commendably acclaimed as champions by the Kop despite the obvious disappointment.

JOHN GREENWOOD
Warrington
Cheshire

Do let's be fair

Sir: I have never been to Old Trafford in my life but that didn't stop me lending my support to Manchester United as I watched their European Cup semi-final against Juventus on TV. Nor did it prevent the eventual enjoyment I took from their stirring victory.

What I find difficult to accept are those moaners and whingers who denigrate United's achievement through mean-mindedness or petty jealousy. To illustrate, a Liverpool season ticket-holding colleague told me that at Anfield on the night of the match, Liverpool fans were chanting "Juve" when the Italians took the lead. What sportsmanship!

JEREMY KENNEDY
Southport

Foreign flair

Sir: I have just looked at your Premiership Team of the Week (Sport, Monday 27 April) and it makes fascinating reading.

The defence is made in Britain, including David Seaman, Gary Neville, Rio Ferdinand, Tony Adams and Nigel Winterburn, but the midfield and attack, with the exception of Kevin Campbell (who is newly returned from Turkey) comprises the Best of the Rest: Dietmar Hamann, Eyal Berkovic, Patrick Vieira, Harry Kewell and Nwankwo Kanu.

There, in one team, a reflection of the Premiership (Manchester United excepted), with the stout British defenders doing and dying in the rearguard and the skilful, creative foreigners providing imagination and flair.

And David Ginola wins the PFA Player of the Year Award just to prove the point.

ANDREW SCOTT
Bloxwich
West Midlands

Phillips pursues a dream ending

From Baldock to Budapest, the latest England attacking hope has earned his chance today. By Glenn Moore

IN THE film *When Saturday Comes*, Sean Bean plays a non-League player who goes out with his mates on the eve of a trial for Sheffield United. The following morning Bean wakes hungover, smelling of booze and with a stripper in bed beside him. To the delight of his jealous father, who had goaded him into the night out, he fails the trial.

Kevin Phillips' father was made of better stock. "He kept my feet on my ground in my non-League days," said the Sunderland striker of Ray Phillips yesterday. "My mates were ringing me up on a Friday night saying: 'let's go out', and he was saying: 'you've got a game tomorrow'. It was only non-League but I wouldn't have done myself justice if I had been going out."

Phillips' dedication will be rewarded today when walks out to play in the England attack against Hungary at the Nép Stadium. The story of his progress, from playing full-back for Baldock Town and stacking shelves for Dixons, is even more far-fetched than the plotline of *When Saturday Comes* - which eventually saw Bean lead Sheffield United to victory over Manchester United in an FA Cup tie.

It is not, however, a fairytale as Ray Phillips, having died

suddenly three years ago, will not be present to see his son win his first cap. Kevin said yesterday: "It hit me very hard but I'm sure he'll be looking down at me. He would be very proud."

Kevin Phillips' own emotions are tinged with relief. At the weekend it did not seem as if he would even be travelling to Hungary as his 17-month-old daughter, Millie Ann, was rushed to hospital with suspected meningitis.

"She's not been well for about three weeks," said Phillips. "We took her to the game on Saturday, which was the first time for a while, and I got called off the pitch during a warm-up to be told she'd come over all lifeless."

Phillips, who pulled out of Sunderland's match to go to hospital with his daughter, added: "It was scary. I thought I was losing her, she had a penicillin injection straight away but, thankfully, it was just a virus. I've been phoning home every couple of hours but she's fine now."

Freed from anxiety over his daughter, Phillips is now looking forward to the biggest step of a remarkable career. Hertfordshire born and bred, he joined Southampton as a 14-year-old striker only to be converted to a full-back - the



Kevin Phillips, who cleaned Alan Shearer's boots at Southampton, prepares for his England debut today. *Empics*

usual story: "they said I was too small to play up front" - then released at 18.

The nearest he had got to the first team was cleaning Alan Shearer's boots. When they met up again at the team hotel on Sunday Shearer, who will partner Phillips in attack tonight, said to him: "You can come up and clean my boots after training."

Having told Chris Nicholl, the then-Southampton manager, that he "would prove him wrong", Phillips went to Baldock, where he initially struggled to adapt to playing men's football. He finally gained a place before, one Friday night, taking a phone call

from Ian Allinson, the former Arsenal striker, who was Baldock's manager.

"He said we were struggling for centre-forwards and had I ever played there? I scored two goals the next day and never looked back."

In another twist the match was at Burnham, just down the road from the England team hotel at Burnham Beeches. Les Ferdinand, then in the England team, had come along to watch.

In the meantime Phillips supplemented his £180-a-week at Baldock with a variety of jobs. He worked at Sunblest, a radiator manufacturers, drove a fork-lift truck, and at

Dixons. When Watford came in for him he took a pay-cut. Two years later Sunderland paid £225,000 (since increased to £670,000) for him. Playing alongside Niall Quinn, whom he once watched as an Arsenal fan on the North Bank at Highbury, he has scored 53 goals in 79 appearances despite a bad injury this season.

One of the goals was at Wembley in last season's promotion play-off and, although the penalty shoot-out defeat to Charlton left him shattered, he had at least settled one family score. "Karen, my little sister, had played at Wembley before me, for Hemel Hempstead Ladies. I was so jealous."

This season has brought a First Division championship medal and now an England cap. Phillips, 25, seems unaffected by his call-up and both determined and intelligent enough to take advantage of it. He is taking a big step up from the Nationwide League but he added: "I've always believed in my own ability, this is a fantastic life and if you put the work in you get rewards."

"He excites me," the England coach, Kevin Keegan, said. "I'm not going to build him up because he has all experience at this level but watching him in training, I thought: 'This is where he belongs'."

Irish back Uefa ban on Yugoslavia

BY STEVE TONGUE
in Dublin

IRISH FOOTBALL officials yesterday welcomed the call by foreign ministers of the European Union for an end to sporting contact with Yugoslavia. That recommendation adds to the pressure on Uefa, the game's European governing body, to throw Yugoslavia out of the European Championship, just as it did before the 1993 finals.

Such a move could only benefit the Republic of Ireland, who lost 1-0 in Belgrade last November, in a match postponed for a month because of the political situation there.

Four other Group Eight matches in Yugoslavia, Croatia and Macedonia have subsequently been put off and the Irish have been pressing Uefa for a decision on whether either Yugoslavia or Macedonia will be able to fulfill their fixtures in Dublin early in June.

An announcement is due on 11 May but could now be brought forward. Bernard O'Byrne, the Football Association of Ireland's chief executive, said: "I always felt it would be a United Nations or European Union edict that would persuade Uefa to act. The most straightforward interpretation of this decision is that Yugoslavia will be removed from the competition. We hope that Macedonia are treated fairly as they are victims in all of this."

The Republic of Ireland manager, Mick McCarthy, preparing for his side's friendly at home to Sweden tonight, said: "It's unsettling because the lads have been asking what's happening and it's impossible to give them an itinerary for the summer."

Meanwhile, he is ploughing on in his phlegmatic way, accepting that five drop-outs from the original squad is fewer than might have been expected at this stage of the season. Derby's Lee Carsley became the fifth when he was sent home yesterday with an ankle injury.

One man's withdrawal is another man's opportunity, however, and David Connolly, Mark Kennedy and Stephen Carr are among those hoping to benefit. All three will start tonight, Carr for the first time. For Connolly, who is due to return from Wolves to Feyenoord but knows he has no future there, it is a particularly good chance to put himself in the shop window.

Potential purchasers should note that he comes with a promise of satisfaction from McCarthy, who said: "He looks sharp as a tack. His record for the Republic speaks for itself. He needs to get a move and, whoever he plays for, I guarantee he'll score goals."

Connolly will partner Niall Quinn in attack. Robbie Keane and Damien Duff are being rested after their exertions at the World Youth Championship in Nigeria, so Kennedy comes in on the left.

Jesper Blomqvist, one of the few United players declared fit for international football this week, will feature in a strong Swedish side. With a five-point lead in their group over England, whom they beat 2-1 in September, Sweden see a game against opposition drawn largely from the Premiership as perfect preparation for the return at Wembley on 5 June.

Scotland's player of the year, Henrik Larsson, will play, although his club-mate Johan Mjallby, Coventry's Magnus Hedman and Arsenal's Fredrik Ljungberg have all withdrawn.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Glenn (Newcastle Utd), Carr (Nottingham), Conaghan (Wimbledon), Shearer (Blackburn), Shearer (Liverpool), McCarthy (Blackburn), Niall (Blackburn), Kennedy (Wimbledon), Quinn (Sunderland), Connolly (Wolves).

SWEDEN: Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley), Nilsson (Barnsley).



"Looks like rain. We'll take the car."



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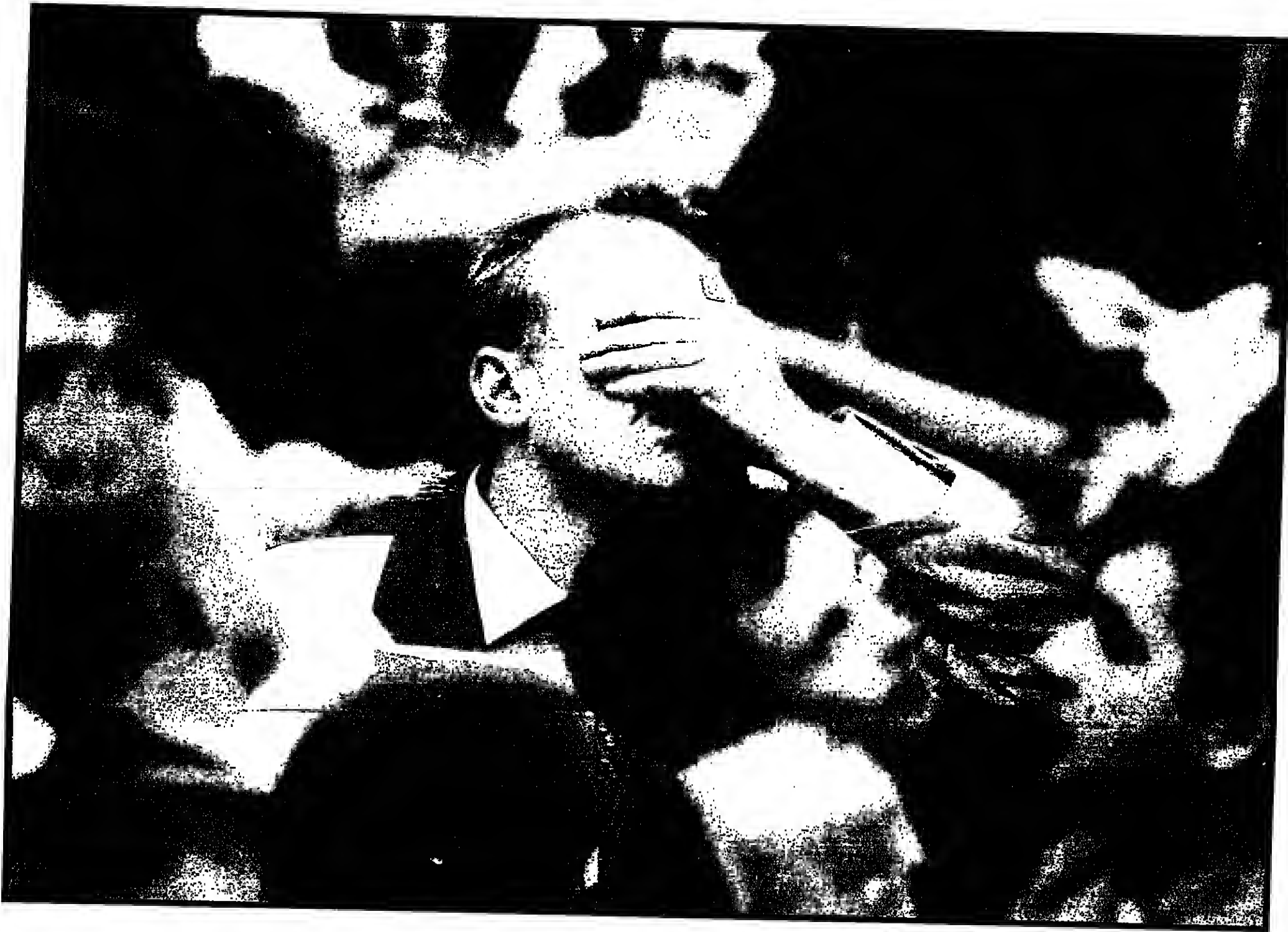
THE INDEPENDENT

Wednesday 28 April 1999

BUSINESS REVIEW

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Inside: The Welsh Wizard who cast a spell on Sony, 4
How Lara Croft made a man of Charles Cornwall, 5
A toast to the brewer's brewer, 6

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THE BUSINESS WORLD

Telecom mergers begin to border on a frenzy

IT'S MERGER mania in telecoms. Well, it's merger mania in several other sectors too, including oil, autos and financial services, but the revolution in the structure of the global telecommunications industry has a special urgency unparalleled elsewhere.

Indeed, the changes in ownership are coming so bewilderingly quickly that it is quite hard to grasp what the new structure of the industry might be in, say, 10 years' time. It is still harder to figure out the social and economic consequences of such rapid change.

The jumble of information, plans, ideas and rumours has become particularly tangled over the last few days. There are big, straightforward deals such as the bid by AT&T for MediaOne, or the earlier take-over by Vodafone of AirTouch. There are big, amorphous deals such as the tie-up between AT&T and BT on the one hand and Japan Telecom on the other. And there are big, nightmare deals such as the proposed Deutsche Telekom/Telecom Italia deal.

I don't think I can recall any other

proposed liaison that has attracted the "marriage made in hell" label quite so swiftly, and it would be astounding if the deal were to go through, let alone be a success. But the very fact that people come up with deals that ignore the cultural dimension in business, shows the fury of the tempest that is sweeping across the industry.

Let's try to sort out what's happening. There are, I suggest, four quite separate elements to the telecoms revolution.

First is deregulation/privatisation. An industry where structural change has been held up by a combination of regulation and state ownership is cramming 10 or more years of restructuring into as many months.

Second is a rapid fall in the cost of production, brought about mainly by the switch from copper to fibre optics, but also by other changes such as the falling cost of satellites. Third is the development of new technologies, which have turned mobile communications from a niche market into a mass one.

And finally there has been a

surge in demand from data traffic. The Internet boom means that telephony will, in the space of one decade, shift from being a medium for transmitting speech to one for transmitting data.

The changes are related. For example, the pressure for deregulation has come largely from the changing pattern of demand and the development of mobile communications. The surge in demand could not have been accommodated had there not also been a technical change, which created much more supply.

But the forces for change are separate. There was, after all, a surge in mobile communications before the medium switched from analogue to digital. So in thinking through the new structure of the industry you are best to begin by looking at each of these factors.

Regulation: it is hard to see any significant barriers remaining for long, because the competitive nature of the business is such that ways will be found to get round them. For example, while national phone monopolies may notion-



HAMISH MCRAE

An industry where structural change has been held up by a combination of regulation and state ownership is cramming 10 or more years of restructuring into as many months

ally remain, they won't matter much in competitive terms. If prices of fixed-line connects remain out of line, users will switch to mobile, where costs are plunging and technology is racing forward.

So the barriers to restructuring won't be regulation or ownership but rather culture and language. You can see this already. The barriers to the German/Italian tie-up are cultural: who will run the show and how many people in which country are going to be sacked?

Next, the falling cost of producing a telecommunications service: here, I believe the collapse in transmission charges has hardly begun. Calls anywhere in the world are already effectively free on the Internet, for example.

Consider what has happened to the hotel telephone. Hotels have traditionally charged large sums for using the phone by the bed - but GSM technology means we now use our mobiles instead. Even the premium for mobility will disappear, and as it does it is perfectly possible that voice traffic will transfer almost entirely to mobiles. If

this is right, the industry is going to see much of its present revenue stream cut away.

Within a decade telecommunications will be so cheap that we won't even think about them. If that is tough for the industry, it will also be fascinating in social and economic terms for the rest of us.

Mobility: at the moment telecom groups that are primarily fixed-line are larger than those that are primarily mobile. It is at least plausible that this will change, and that having a line into a home or office will cease to be an advantage. Having a billing relationship may even cease to matter: for if prices come down enough we may buy our calls as pre-paid phone cards from the supermarket.

We know that users like mobility, so there ought to be some premium for it. What we don't know is how large that will be and whether a purchase relationship will be more appropriate than a billing one.

Finally, data traffic: yes, it will carry on its explosive growth for several years, maybe a genera-

tion, before it too becomes a mature business, and yes, there will be some money in carrying the data because the volumes will grow so rapidly. But this is a commodity business, not a high-value-added one, so the money will be made only by groups that are globally the lowest-cost producers. The inevitable result will be many more global mergers and partnerships.

What are the structural implications of all this? I don't think it is possible to do more than guess at the appropriate structure for the industry 10 years hence, except to say that the companies will have to strive to be either low-cost giants or clever niche players.

Look, for example, at the motor industry. The barriers in the path of the trend towards this motor industry model will be cultural and national. To what extent does a country accept the idea of its communications being provided by a foreign multinational? If the motor industry is any guide, not much. Maybe the problem with that German/Italian job is that it is about a decade before its time.

DATELINE: VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Danube trade is the latest casualty of war

FOR a shipping man, Herbert Petsig is spending an inordinate amount of time dealing with trains and lorries.

The managing director of Austria's main shipping company, DDSG Cargo, has a big problem. Nato's bombing of bridges over the Danube in Serbia has sent tons of rubble into the water, blocking the river and much of his business. Of Mr Petsig's 152 boats, more than 60 have been stranded around Novi Sad in Yugoslavia: 33 are in Romania, 13 are in Hungary and 18 are stuck without cargo or anywhere to go in Austria and southern Germany.

His priority is keeping business going until the end of fighting allows the river to be reopened. This involves expensive operations in Hungary and Romania, moving goods off the ships and on to trains and trucks. It costs three times more to transport goods by rail than by river, and seven times more to take them by road. At least 20,000 tons of grain, animal feed and other agricultural products have already been transferred to trains, but all the coal and iron ore is still stuck on barges in Romania.

"You can certainly say it has been a terrible month," said Mr Petsig. "And it is likely to be a terrible year." Daily losses are running at over 1m schillings (£50,000) from the blockade. "I expect May to be at least as bad as April," said Mr Petsig. "It will not improve for as long as the bridges are impassable. Then it becomes a question of getting cus-

BY HANNAH CLEAVER

tomers back from the railways. Transport on the river is more environmentally friendly and cheaper, but the fear among customers is that this sort of thing could happen again. It's very very difficult. There was a UN blockade between 1991 and 1994 and we lost a lot of customers then. We have worked very hard to win them back but now it seems as if we could lose them again." He said he feared there was little reason to hope business could be turned around at all this year. The clearance of the river itself could take at least four months, he said.

The company has already reached the stage where jobs are at risk. "Of the 180 jobs on the ships, at least a third are seriously endangered," said Mr Petsig. The next few weeks will see a reduction in the company's fixed costs, meaning wages. "Or we can wait until the company goes under and then there will be a lot more redundancies all at once," he said.

Mr Petsig is not the only man in Vienna with serious concerns. The Austrian Chamber of Commerce reported last week that the country's five biggest companies were losing 5m schillings (£250,000) a day. Industrial giant Voest-Alpine Stahl, the country's main steel producer, needs 150,000 tons of iron ore each month, most of which comes from Ukraine. Rather than being shipped up the Danube, the ore is now being transported by rail, said a spokesman.

Conversations between those in the shipping business are already turning to the question of who will finance the clearance of the river. Mr Petsig fears he and fellow shippers will have to foot the bill. "The Yugoslavs will say, 'We didn't destroy them', so it will be up to us to pay for it," he said.

Danube countries have already accepted that Yugoslavia will be in no financial position to rebuild the bridges itself - and certainly not within the necessary time-scale. The Danube Commission of 10 countries with strong interests in the river ended a week-long assembly in Budapest, Hungary, last weekend by agreeing that member states should help to clean and clear the Yugoslav section of the river. But the commission, now headed by the Austrian representative Hannes Forst, said it would expect to work closely with international organisations and financial institutions when restoring the Danube.

If nothing else, the member states have time: the bombing shows little sign of abating. Nato planes hit targets in Novi Sad this week, reportedly making the last Danube bridge impassable for lorries and trains.

The Danube has always been one of the most important waterways in Europe. Traffic peaked in 1987 at 100 million tons but declined after the break-up of the Soviet Union and was further hit by sanctions against Yugoslavia during the Bosnian war. By 1994 annual traffic had fallen to 19 million tons. The river stretches from southern Germany, through



Businesses all along the river Danube have suffered from Nato's destruction of bridges in Serbia

Austria and then south and east through Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and the Ukraine. Ships and barges take grain and soya from west to east, passing loads of iron ore and coal going the opposite way. The latter makes up the lion's share of the traffic - an economic lifeline to emerging economies in the former Eastern Bloc.

River transport has received official encouragement from politicians keen to reduce expensive and environmentally damaging lorry traffic. Before the latest fighting, analysts had predicted growth in

Danube traffic of 1.5 per cent per year for the next 15 years.

A big share of this would come from emerging economies east of Vienna but these are the areas most badly affected by the blockade, and the ones that can least afford the dip in trade. About 65 per cent of Bulgaria's exports are transported on the river. Moving the cargo - most of it bulky minerals and fuels - by road and rail has already cost the country an estimated \$6.3m (£3.8m).

In Romania, the Transport Ministry reported that broken contracts on stranded vessels could cost \$2.8m a month, while the country's largest

shipping company, state-run Navrom, said it stood to lose about \$25m this year from the loss of Danube traffic. The fear is that if the river is not reopened soon, Romanian trade will become utterly uncompetitive. A statement from the Industry Ministry says exports could become almost impossible because of a four to seven-fold increase in transport costs.

The problems for Vienna are immediate rather than long-term. As one of the richest countries in Europe, Austria can afford to lose a few million US dollars a month while the Danube is blocked. And although this

and probably next year are likely to be bad ones for DDSG Cargo, Mr Petsig said the longer-term future for Danube traffic remained bright. "If the clearance is fast and effective we could win our customers back on to the water. The roads and railways are increasingly busy and the waterways still have great potential for transport. But the next two years will be very, very difficult," he said.

The biggest concern is not the temporary loss of Danube shipping but the fear that the vulnerable emerging economies from which Vienna and Austria profit could be seriously damaged by the blockade.

A WEEKLY DIGEST OF THE WORLD'S FINANCIAL PRESS

BusinessWeek

BUSINESS WEEK

Comment on the enthusiasm over the resurgence of Asia's economies

GROWING EUPHORIA over Asia's economic rebound is starting to echo the exuberance of the days just before its crash. Stock markets in Hong Kong and Seoul are nearly back to their all-time highs. The message is that Asia is "fixed" and we can all pick up where we left off nearly two years ago. Wrong. The critical regulatory and economic reforms needed to sustain a rebound are only half-done. Unless they are completed, hopes of reviving double-digit growth are misguided. Thailand has bottomed out. Indonesia remains a political powder keg. And Malaysia, which implemented little economic reforms.

The strength of Asia's two biggest economies - Japan and China - is also in doubt. The IMF expects Japan's economy to shrink again in 1999. Meanwhile, China's economy is being kept afloat by enormous public-works spending. With state enterprises shedding millions of workers, exports weak, and its banks in trouble, China is struggling to maintain growth.

- Editorial of *BusinessWeek*

The Economist

THE ECONOMIST

On the proposed merger between Deutsche Telekom and Telecom Italia

THIS DEAL should not go ahead. And there remains a good chance that it will not. There is much to negotiate between the firms, and the competition authorities in Europe and America will want to study the merger closely.

The Italian government has a golden share, giving it a right of veto over such momentous decisions. But the real choice rests with the German government, which still owns 74 per cent of the privatised company. Like many of Europe's recently privatised monopolies, Deutsche Telekom is neither fish nor fowl. It is a private company and thinks like a branch of the civil service. The government's instinct to entrench the firm's independence by seeming to stand back is understandable. But for the majority shareholder to pretend neutrality in a bid like this would be a mistake. If the government simply votes its shares the way that Telekom's managers ask it to, the board will have total power. That is a recipe for the self-aggrandising coup that this merger represents.

- Editorial comment

FINANCIAL TIMES

FINANCIAL TIMES

The South African Mining group Anglo reorganises its operations

THE POINTS for investors to focus on are mercifully simple. In the short term there may be a scramble for stock as the new Anglo looks bound to join the FTSE 100 index in late June. The share is tightly held for a FTSE stockcover 50 per cent is owned by De Beers and Oppenheimer interests. Yet the company will carry its full weight in the index and no new shares are being issued.

More fundamentally the argument for mining shares is that the metal prices must be somewhere near the bottom of the cycle. And South Africans are rated well below their North American counterparts. But there are good reasons for a discount, at least in Anglo's case. Although its platinum strength is a plus, the diamond market is rigged and opaque. And even if South Africa surmounts its political and economic problems, recovery in the rand would squeeze Anglo's margins. Buying of the old Anglo shares in Johannesburg has been voracious recently: the shares are 75 per cent above their year-end level.

- Editorial comment

BARRON'S

BARRON'S

Analysts are pondering the revival of interest in industrial cyclical

AT SOME point over the next five year the US economy may falter. But the setback is likely to be short-lived, and the long-term expansion that began in 1982 should persist. And over the same time frame the economies of the rest of the world will be in much better shape than today.

That scenario for the global economy seems more plausible than any other - far more so than the thick gloom that pervaded the analyst community only six months ago. And it perhaps best explains the sudden revival of industrial cyclical stocks.

Analysts have been reluctant to view the industrial cyclical as buying candidates. And to get back to bleak reality, while earnings have generally been looking better for these stocks one must bear in mind that almost across the board earnings are projected to be flat to lower for 1999.

So it may be premature to start buying these stocks. But timing is always a fine art and, especially with a five-year outlook, it's better to be too early than too late.

- Gene Epstein, staff writer

Forbes

FORBES

There is European hostility to US bids to buy up asset-rich companies

A MONTH ago Guy Wyser-Pratte arrived with his wife at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport on a routine business trip from New York. They were stopped at customs by brusque officials who held them for half an hour in a bare room and went through everything in their bags before releasing them without a word of explanation.

Wyser-Pratte can't prove it but he's sure that the search was orchestrated by a politically connected executive at one of the many companies that he's targeted for restructuring in recent years. This much is certain. As head of New York-based Wyser-Pratte & Co with some \$500m (£315m) in assets under management to invest in poorly managed companies Guy Wyser-Pratte is persona non grata in some of Europe's finest drawing rooms.

Wyser-Pratte and other pioneers are beginning to reap big profits by taking minority stakes in asset-rich, poorly managed companies outside the US and forcing management to unlock their hidden values.

- Justin Doebele, staff writer

FORTUNE

FORTUNE

Western investment is beginning to flood into the Japanese markets

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM has it that there are some great deals to be done in Japan these days. Last year foreign firms spent a record \$6.9bn (£4.3bn) acquiring Japanese companies; a sixfold increase over 1997, according to KPMG. Yes there is change afoot in Japan, but the numbers are deceptive. Has the purchaser bought gold or dross?

In fact most of what the foreigners have bought so far are prestigious names attached to sick, debt-laden institutions. As Daimler-Chrysler discovered recently when it walked away from merger talks with troubled Nissan Motors, it's sometimes hard to figure out where the timebombs are inside a Japanese company.

It's understandable that Western deal-makers are attracted to Japan. But to many Japanese such thinking is a threat. What will force Japan to change its attitude? More hard times. Today Japanese corporations still rely on close relationships with a "main bank". For that particular institution the beginning of the end is in sight.

- Michael Zielenszger, of Knight Ridder



Despite the harsh reality of the global market place, Brian Williamson is optimistic: 'London is vibrant. It does a majority of forward-rate dealing in the yen, dollar, euro. It just has to get its act together' Kalpesh Lathigra

The bright side of Liffe

BY ANDREW GARFIELD

It was Liffe, but not as the traders in their flash jackets once knew it. The London International Financial Futures Exchange was being dealt off the floor by its rivals, and all it could look forward to was a slow, humiliating death. But six months after the arrival of the sober-suited Brian Williamson, and with help from the unfashionable euro, Liffe is starting to look up again

WHEN BRIAN Williamson was persuaded to return after an absence of 10 years to head up Liffe, the London futures exchange, few people gave him much of a chance. It was a brave thing to do, it was widely said in the City, but essentially the battle had already been lost. Over the previous two years, trading in Europe's biggest volume futures contract, the benchmark bund, had upped roots and migrated almost in its entirety from the hand-waving brightly coloured jackets of Liffe's trading floor to the electronic screen-based dealing system of the Frankfurt-based Eurex.

For years, Liffe had deluded itself into thinking that its "open outcry" method of face-to-face trading, was the only way to run a futures market. A mixture of arrogance and powerful vested interest made it impervious to change. When Frankfurt launched its electronic trading screens, Liffe was there for the taking, and as its main claim to be a genuinely international exchange, the bund contract, seeped away, Liffe seemed destined for the second division - or worse. Liffe, in the view of many was caught in a time warp and destined for irrelevance.

The picture today could hardly be more different. Just six months after Mr Williamson took back the helm, Liffe is back on the map.

What should have been the final nail in its coffin, the advent of the euro, has instead brought about a renaissance in its affairs. From a standing start Liffe has captured nearly 90 per cent of the trade in the benchmark euro interest future, the Euribor contract with more than 2 trillion euro's worth of business traded through the exchange. The London futures market is again making the running against competition not just from the Germans, but from the fragmented American futures exchanges, who for once are running to catch up.

But Liffe, Mr Williamson insists, is not out of the woods yet. "I thought there was one year in which to secure the future of the exchange," he says. "I don't think we will really know whether it has a future and where it lies until that year is complete."

Eurex still dominates the long-end of the Euro derivatives market, while Liffe has yet successfully to complete the transition into the computer age. Yet, there is an optimism in the London market today which is such a far cry from the gloom and despondency which ruled last summer that the two beasts are barely recognisable as one and the same.

Grabbing the entire Euro money market futures business from under the noses of the Germans and Liffe's French rival Matif within weeks of the euro's launch, was, Mr Williamson acknowledges, a significant victory. "That was the first time I realised we had a real chance not just of saving the exchange but of actually re-establishing our past success."

Mr Williamson, a dapper, 53-year-old whose conventional City look and accent belie an unorthodox approach, was one of the driving forces in setting up the exchange in the teeth of entrenched City op-

position nearly two decades ago. Within weeks of his return to Liffe's Cannon Street headquarters, the sense of change was palpable. "He has done what good leaders do," says Mathew Fosh, of brokers SGF Futures & Options. "He has given Liffe confidence in the future."

That future has come to hold a crucial symbolic importance for the City of London, as it agonises about its place in a European and global market place where speed and efficiency count for rather more than the old school tie. For years, the success of Liffe with its colourfully plumaged traders, muttering equally colourful expletives as they barked out prices in German or Italian government bond futures, appeared to silence the doubts.

When all that crumbled last summer, after the Swiss-German Eurex took control of the bund futures market, it seemed the pessimists, who said the single currency heralded the end of London's role as Europe's financial centre, were right. To Mr Williamson it was clear Liffe was heading for serious problems: "In this market, you can't be arrogant, you can't be alone, you can't be aloof. For a while Liffe was all three."

Towards the end of the chairmanship of his predecessor Jack Wigglesworth, he says it was obvious "radical change was necessary". In particular, Mr Williamson believed, Liffe needed a "commercial edge", an odd thing for a market operating at the frontiers of financial trade not to have, but all too plainly lacking at Liffe.

Immediately after taking charge of Liffe in August, Mr Williamson embarked on a lightning tour of Liffe's big institutional customers in an effort to find out what it would take to win their confidence back. Listening to what the customers want is hardly business rocket science, but it was something that had fallen into sad neglect at Liffe. One of his first moves was to appoint a chief executive, the South African-born Hugh Freedberg to take charge of day to day management, freeing time to concentrate on big picture issues. He also drafted in a host of City figures including Sir Brian Pitman, chairman of Lloyd's TSB, the clearing bank, Christopher Sharples from GNL, the broking house, and David Hardy, head of the London Clearing House. Within weeks, this so-called Fast Progress Group had come up with an action plan for

reversing Liffe's decline. Eurex had stolen a march by being first out of the traps with a screen-based trading system which was cheaper than Liffe and allowed dealing from almost anywhere around the globe. Eurex also benefited from the backing of the big German banks and the political sponsorship of the German government.

Liffe, which had been able to get away with charging what it liked by virtue of its former stranglehold over the European derivatives market, first had to get a grip on costs. Secondly, it had to grasp the nettle of technology, which it had repeatedly ducked. That meant accelerating the development of its screen-based trading system Liffe Connect and, hardest of all, waving goodbye to the trading pits, which to the outside world are the visible face of Liffe and the City. To survive, Liffe would have to become leaner, fitter and cheaper.

Since November, when Mr Williamson announced that 60 per cent of Liffe's 1000 staff would have to go, more than a third of Liffe's 20 trading pits have closed. Last week Liffe's gilt futures pit was shut. In two weeks the FTSE 100, 250 index futures pits close, leaving the exchange with five times as much real estate on its hands than it will need. By the time the process is over Liffe will have cut its costs by more than a half compared with last year.

Liffe's board has been streamlined and the Exchange's shareholding structure changed to allow outside investors to participate, a first step towards an eventual goal of a stock market flotation. Liffe will no longer be a club of exchange members, but a commercial company whose ability to fund development will depend on its success in producing results.

As Liffe grows in confidence once more,

attention has begun to focus again on the failings of its competitors. Eurex, which a year ago steamrollered all before it, has had its setbacks these past few months. In January a traders' revolt at the Chicago Board of Trade, led to the Windy City's premier derivatives exchange tearing up an agreement to form an alliance with Eurex and opting to go alone.

Eurex's customers too have started to defect. Critics say Eurex's computer trading system, now several years old, is creaking under the strain. There are mutterings about whether Eurex's bureaucratic settlement and clearing system is up to the task of processing the volumes required.

Many in the industry think Chicago, once the world derivatives capital, is also riding for a fall. David Brennan, the new chairman of the CBOT may be about to repeat the mistakes Liffe made several years ago when, because of pressure from floor traders, it insisted on clinging to its open outcry traditions while others plunged headlong into the technology game. The traditional duopoly of the Chicago Board of Trade and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange is threatened by a new private sector initiative from Cantor Fitzgerald, the brokerage which wants to launch its own exchange.

For those displaced by the changes, life has been tough. The hardest hurdle to overcome has been the psychological one of ditching what to many has been the heart and soul of Liffe since it was launched in the heady days of the early 1980s. Looking back, it is hard to remember the ridicule which first accompanied the appearance on the streets of the City of the Liffe traders, with their trademark blazers, hand signals and sharp-witted, barrow boy terminology - so much have they become part of the City landscape.

The multicoloured jackets, were, like many of the features which were to become an integral part of the London futures market, copied wholesale from Chicago, which was the only model of a successful futures market around when Liffe was founded. Traders were often greeted with cries of "two ice-lollies" or "ice-cream man".

Yet they were to become a City institution. To many, the floor is the market, the gyrating arms, the shouting, the aggression, the epitome of real capitalism, red in tooth and claw. Giving up that raw energy for the more cerebral pleasures of watching numbers dance on a screen is not going to be easy.

Already, the pubs and champagne bars along Cannon Street are noticeably less crowded. The swarms of blue, green and red jacketed traders that once flooded the neighbouring streets every lunch time has slowed to a trickle. The hardest hit have been the locals - the freelance traders who in their heyday provided most of the liquidity - the lifeblood of any market.

Some have already retrained for a more office-bound existence as screen-based traders. Others have simply thrown in the towel. One has recycled his market gains to open a restaurant in Spain.

Romantic question whether the new computer-driven market will ever produce the rags-to-riches heroes that the floor-based trading of yesteryear spawned - figures like Terry Crawley, the £100-a-week carpet layer from Bermondsey who made the Sunday Times Rich List after netting £8m a year as a Liffe trader. The successful in the new computer-based market will be of a different breed, more intellectual, better-educated, relying more on analysis of long-term market trends, and less on animal instinct.

Miles Blackstein, a Liffe local who like many in the market has had to re-invent himself over the past six months, says: "It was a very unreal life. There were periods when you could just walk in and make £5,000 for a few hours work. You never forget the first time you walk on the floor and there are 2,000 people screaming. There were moments like just before the New York opening when everyone was stamping their feet. It was very exciting."

Mr Williamson, who started in the City

when the stock exchange was a seething pit of jobbers sporting top hats, believes the passage of the stereotypical Liffe trader is inevitable. "London has always been primarily an institutional market," he says.

These days markets are expected to operate through "open systems", not closed proprietary methods, hardware and spaces - the idea being that trading houses will buy their own computer hardware and have prices piped in from a variety of sources. Mr Williamson reckons this is the real challenge ahead for the derivatives exchanges. Rather than pushing its own trading system exclusively, it has signed up with 15 software providers so that its Liffe Connect system can be offered to anyone with a desktop PC.

Another issue is that publicly traded contracts such as stock exchange or currency futures are now a small proportion of total derivatives business. The big growth area is so-called over-the-counter derivatives, tailor-made instruments like swaps, which allow institutions to hedge interest rate risk. The bulk of these are offered by banks to other banks and financial institutions, rather than through exchanges. The drawback is that these contracts are only as good as the bank you bought them from, whereas exchange-traded contracts are guaranteed by the exchange and can be freely bought and sold without risk of default.

Mr Williamson's ambition is to offer exchange versions of these products.

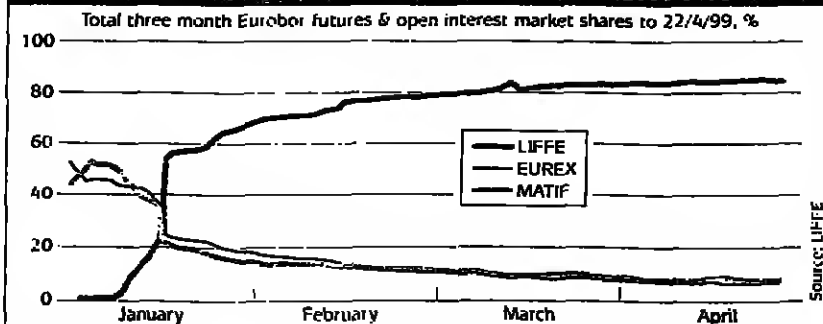
Finally, there is also the issue - banal to the outsider - of clearing. The corollary of being able to trade at the flick of the switch, is that someone is at hand to make sure that at the end of the day everything balances up. What banks want more than anything these days is centralised global clearing, so that trades done on one exchange can be matched with trades on another exchange. Mr Williamson believes if anyone can provide that service it is London, the only financial centre in the world, New York included, which is comfortable dealing with the demands of a truly international client base. Mathew Fosh of SFG says if he can resolve this problem, he will have found the financial markets equivalent of the Holy Grail.

The harsh reality Mr Williamson faces is that in a global market place, exchanges are no longer about having a physical presence, buildings, traders, history, or a culture, but about providing services to a footloose clientele more efficiently than anyone else. "Change," says Mr Fosh, "is inevitable. What the exchanges will end up being is IT houses with product capability."

Mr Williamson sees that as an opportunity, not a threat. "I am optimistic. The reason I am optimistic is that all the people who do the business are in London. London is such a vibrant place. It does a majority of forward rate dealing in the yen, dollar, euro."

"London has a great opportunity to have settlement in equity, bond, derivatives markets, all together. All the people who do that business are here. London just has to get its act together."

HOW LIFFE HAS SEEN OFF ITS COMPETITORS



ENTERPRISE ISSUES

Consensus should apply to both rich and poor

IT WAS at a conference in 1990, sponsored by the prestigious Institute for International Economics, that the term "Washington Consensus" was coined. This was a collection of policy prescriptions for developing economies which were squarely in the tradition of orthodox economics: sound government finances, liberalisation of trade and investment, privatisation, deregulation, and so on.

It was a received wisdom that was probably never widely enough shared to deserve the term consensus, even though most governments in most parts of the world put its precepts into practice throughout the 1990s. But since the financial crisis of last summer, the Washington consensus has looked a bit threadbare. The tigers of South-east Asia had embraced it wholeheartedly and yet many of them still plunged into crisis.

A new World Bank publication has ridden to the rescue. Called "Beyond the Washington Consensus: Institutions Matter", it concludes that the standard policy

recommendations were not wrong, just incomplete. Critics will say this is a bid by one of the Big Brother institutions of the world economy to alter the content of the consensus while keeping the Washington bit intact. For the World Bank still has a shopping list of appropriate policies for emerging economies.

But it is worth looking at the lessons drawn from the crisis given that the original Washington consensus did generate such spectacular growth in the countries that embraced it. The new report concludes that the mistake was to overlook the importance of the institutional structure of economies. The sound macroeconomic policies were applied regardless of the historical and cultural context of individual economies, as if there really were such a thing as a pure free market. Of course there is not, and it seems mad that anybody could have imagined otherwise. But it is not that obvious, except with hindsight, that there is any link between the need for a small government budget deficit and, say,

the regulation of the banking system or the types of contract on which civil servants are employed.

The report summarises research on the links between certain types of institutions in developing economies and their growth rates and poverty levels. The results are unsurprising. Respect for property rights, honest civil servants and politicians, protection of investors' and depositors' rights, and so on, are all correlated with higher GDP and lower poverty and inequality. There is a similar link with strong shareholder rights, such as allowing small shareholders to vote by proxy, not setting too high a threshold for the calling of exceptional shareholder meetings, and making it possible for shareholders to oust directors. So in this sense the World Bank vindicates the commonplace conclusion that, broadly speaking, "crony capitalism" was to blame for the severity of the East Asian crisis.

This does not just mean the tendency of eminent politicians to appoint members of their family and



DIANE COYLE

If this is crony capitalism, it is an ailment that does not just afflict developing countries

entourage to all the top jobs. It includes, also, things like legal protections for creditors. One fascinating table ranks countries according to whether or not their laws guarantee that secured creditors get paid first, whether there is an automatic stay on assets, whether managers are forced to leave a bankrupt company, and so on. The developed economies mostly enjoy a high score. So do many countries whose legal system is derived from the Anglo-Saxon tradition, including Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand. But those with traditions more like the French or German – most of Latin America, Korea and Japan – have a lower average score. The same groups do worse on indicators of accounting standards, too.

This comparison prompts the interesting thought that if this is what constitutes crony capitalism, it is an ailment that does not just afflict developing countries. For Germany, too, has close links between banks and corporations not mediated by markets, overlaps

of personnel and misty accounting standards. Even taking a narrow view of crony capitalism, the rich countries share with the developing countries many institutional problems. Russia is not alone in being plagued by the web of Mafia control ensnaring its businesses or by massive tax evasion; but Italy is a very wealthy country and Russia is not. Just recently the entire European Commission was forced to step down over allegations of fraud and mismanagement; the EU budget forms one of the world's biggest gravy trains. The Anglo-Saxons do not escape; after all the US has given us the phrase "pork barrel" politics.

Perhaps it is true, then, that in the end the rich are just different from the rest in having more money. The lesson seems to be that developing economies have to get their macroeconomic policies right (the first version of the Washington consensus); then their microeconomic policies and institutions right (the updated version). And then they need to get richer too, because that

is what really helps weather the storms of financial crisis.

But I think this would be too defeatist a conclusion. The World Bank's authors conclude that, just as the 1980s debt crisis spurred the afflicted countries to cut deficits, liberalise their trade rules and start privatisation programmes, the 1990s crisis will set in train a process of detailed institutional reform. Let's hope the developed economies should be busy applying the same logic to themselves as well as hectoring poorer countries about what they ought to do. For the same set of solutions might well help solve the different kinds of problems faced by different groups of countries. After all, a breath of free-market fresh air in Germany's jobs and capital markets might help reduce its seemingly permanent high unemployment rate. More equal access to education and healthcare in the US might give young men in its ghettos an alternative career to prison. There cannot be one Washington consensus for the poor and another for the rich.

FOCUS

The man with his finger on Sony's pulse

BY DAVID USBORNE

COULD IT be that Howard Stringer is hankering for a job in television again? It has been four years since the tall Welshman bid a tearful farewell to CBS, the US network that he headed between 1988 and 1993 and which gave him his first job back in 1963. Last week, giving the keynote address to the annual National Association of Broadcasters Convention in Las Vegas, he admitted to pangs of nostalgia. "When I call CBS executives today, I have to spell my name to the receptionist," he lamented with a wry smile.

Let's consider this for a moment. How might we help Mr Stringer find his way back into an industry he is quite obviously missing? Which large broadcasting entity, not necessarily US-based but English-speaking, might be in the market for a new Number One, someone to steer it into the brave new digital age of the 21st Century? How about Director-General as his title rather than president or CEO. Gosh, that's it – our very own Auntie, the BBC. He is from Cardiff, after all, notwithstanding his US citizenship, acquired in 1985. The guy could hardly be a more perfect fit.

Actually, we are a little behind the curve here. For several months, Mr Stringer has been the focus of gossip about a successor to Sir John Birt, who departs the Beeb in April next year. The mention of his name has provoked reactions ranging from "Yes, please" to "Howard who?". There have been some in the Corporation who have been panicked by the notion of Mr Stringer as Director-General, but probably that's because they have been confusing him with another British-born star from the US television universe named Jerry Springer, a man whose meanderings through the sexual low life of the US of A would certainly give a whole new meaning to the notion of public service broadcasting.

Mr Stringer could hardly be more different. He has long qualified for membership of the Brits that made it big in New York club we love to matter about. Somehow, though, our fascination has been directed more often at other paid-up members like Tina Brown, former editor of the

New Yorker, and her husband and long-ago Sunday Times and Times editor, Harold Evans. And yet Mr Stringer, in terms of sheer corporate ladder-climbing, is a far bigger cheese than any of them.

We are not just talking about his past success at CBS. From a South Wales background so cash-strapped that his RAF father could not afford a blazer for him when he won a scholarship to a posh private school, Mr Stringer is now ensconced atop the massive Sony building on New York's Madison Avenue. Indeed, since December, he has been chairman and CEO of Sony Corporation of America, making him number three in the global Sony empire. Understand that and ponder the pivotal role that Sony expects to play worldwide in turning all of our lives over from analogue to digital, and you might begin to wonder whether all this BBC talk isn't a little bit silly.

But we had to ask, and this was the response from Sony's New York PR. "Mr Stringer not long ago received a significant promotion at Sony Corporation of America. At the end of June, he will be named to the board of Sony Corporation. He knows nothing about the rumours regarding the BBC and has no comment". There didn't seem much point in asking for details about his salary; suffice it to say Sony will be paying 57-year-old Stringer rather more than the tax-payer-funded BBC would ever be able to manage.

Nor do we have any evidence, aside from the recent purchase of a modest pile in Oxfordshire, that Mr Stringer is ready to end his love affair with America, the seeds of which were sown during his student days at Merton College at Oxford University. There he mixed with Americans over in Britain on the Rhodes Scholarship programme and began dreaming of a life in the US. In 1963, he sailed to New York with £100 in his pocket. Job interviews eventually took him to CBS where he was given the lowly position of log clerk. Then, just six weeks later, at the height of the Vietnam War, he was drafted.

One of the more endearing stories

about Stringer has him writing to Bobby Kennedy to grumble about his unexpected fate. He recently recalled saying in the letter: "Look I've been here for four months and you want me to die for you? Don't you think that's a little premature?". But the US law said it was quite proper for resident aliens to be conscripted and so Stringer was dispatched and ended up serving 10 months.

At the very end of his official Sony-issued CV it says: "He is a recipient of a US Army Commendation Medal for meritorious achievement for service in Vietnam (1963-67)". Other handy details: he is married to a dermatologist, Dr Jennifer A K Patterson, and has two children. The family lives in New York but also has a bolt-hole in the Hamptons on Long Island named Bear Cottage. This has nothing to do with Stringer's rugby-playing physique (he was captain of the Oxford team) but with his wife's collection of stuffed bears.

Returning from combat, Stringer once more found himself at CBS, where he relentlessly scaled the ranks. Eventually he was to take charge of the Evening News with Dan Rather, helping it to regain viewer dominance over the news shows at ABC and NBC, as well as the network's current affairs division. Under his leadership, the documentary team won a slew of Emmy Awards. It was the then new owner of CBS, the industrialist, Laurence Tisch, who chose Mr Stringer as President of CBS Broadcasting in 1988.

At first, CBS fared brilliantly under Mr Stringer. Despite being forced by Mr Tisch into draconian job cuts, staff remained loyal; his success in taking the company from number three in the prime-time ratings back to number one commanded respect. His greatest moment came in 1993, when he poached late-night talk-show comic David Letterman from NBC. How he did it became the stuff of legend in the industry. One of his moves involved then CBS news broadcaster, Connie Chung, whom Letterman had jokingly fantasised about on air. Mr Stringer persuaded Ms Chung to take a pretend segment promising Letterman, in her most languid voice, that she would moan,



Howard Stringer was being tipped as the next Director-General of the BBC but he looks more at home at Sony

"Oh, Dave! Oh... Dave!", whenever she made love to her husband on condition he filmed CBS. Mr Stringer sent the tape to Letterman.

For Mr Stringer, it was the pinnacle of his career at CBS. In 1994 things started to unravel. Ratings slid dramatically and the network suffered a huge setback when it lost the rights to broadcast National League Football games to a much bigger bid from Fox Broadcasting, owned by Rupert Murdoch. Depressed and fed up, Mr Stringer quit in early 1995.

When he invited some of his closest colleagues to a farewell reception, Mr Stringer's normal gift for words reportedly abandoned him. After his speech, he sat down and wept.

Mr Stringer had been lured away by Michael Ovitz, an old friend and head of the Creative Artists Agency in Los Angeles. What followed was a project called Tele-TV. Bankrolled by three telephone companies, Nynex, Bell Atlantic and PacTel, it was an ultimately ill-fated attempt to use telephone lines to deliver television and Internet services to American homes. Mr Stringer once joked that he had given up CBS to be made "chief executive of a phone booth". Within two years, it was clear

that Tele-TV was doomed. But it had not been time entirely wasted. Mr Stringer, who while at CBS had famously poo-pooed interactivity and all things information super-highway – "I don't think we've found the entrance ramp yet", he once proudly proclaimed – had undergone an awakening at Tele-TV that prepared him well for life at Sony, which scooped him up in April 1997.

Its essence was this: that digital technology and the power of the computer chip were about to revolutionise our relationship with just about everything electronic in our homes – our computers, our televisions, our VCRs. Machines that once had separate functions, like PCs and TVs, were about to be fused. And the prize for those companies that saw it would be huge.

Sony, which makes 30 per cent of its sales in the US, has seen it for sure. In spite of Japan's economic turmoil, the company is in robust shape and is undergoing its own revolution. Helping to fund its success is the PlayStation, which accounts for just a quarter of its revenues. Last month, Sony celebrated the sale of its 50 millionth PlayStation console and unveiled its successor PlayStation II.

Under its Tokyo-based President, Nobuyuki Idei – the man Mr Stringer reports to – Sony is set to take its slice of the digital market.

Part of the change involves turning Sony into a company that is as much committed to software as it is to hardware. Indeed by the end of next year, it will have as many software engineers as hardware designers. But there is more to it than this. It is anticipated that the new approach will eventually pit the corporation – and Mr Stringer – against Microsoft and its founder Bill Gates. "All of us," Mr Stringer remarked recently, "are in a battle with Bill Gates for the living room".

Just heating up is a gigantic struggle between two competing visions. In one corner is Mr Gates, who is betting that at the heart of every newly digitised home will be a PC, equipped with a Windows-based operating system. Sony, with some other allies in the electronics industry, sees a world of smart gadgets, each with their own brains. On your TV will be a Sony set-top box, able to control the TV itself – digital and equipped to raid the Internet – your video recorder, hi-fi system and even your computerised pet. The new PlayStation would also join

the circus, working, for instance, as a DTV player or indeed as the set-top box itself. Also in Sony's future, is a new operating system to be called AperiOS. To be unveiled later this year, it will control digital TVs, cellular phones, or any other gadget Sony dreams up. It will be AperiOS versus Windows, Stringer versus Gates.

When Mr Stringer stood before the delegates at the broadcasting convention last week, it was not to share old times with them. Rather, he lectured them on the need to embrace the digital revolution. Directing his comments specifically at the networks, he declared: "Digital TV is inevitable... Digital TV will change the world. At Sony, we view the DTV as the command centre for a digital home network. We help you figure out lots of marvellous ways to make your business work better. And all we ask in return is that you stop trying to bury your chardonnay about lost share".

We have yet to hear Mr Stringer, rather than his PR lackies, ruling himself out from the Birt succession. But who are we kidding? Mr Stringer has done TV which would you find more interesting – the annual politicking over the licence fee, or taking on Bill Gates for control of our homes?

THE PLAYER: JOHN FINAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WINTERTHUR LIFE UK

After an unfair share of the market

BY NICOLA REEVES

PERSONAL DETAILS: Age 60. Lives in Berkshire. Drives Jaguar XK8. Pay in 1997, excluding pension contributions, £253,000. Likes golf and boating.

CHALLENGE: Wintertthur Life UK has grown by 700 per cent in the past seven years but expenses have risen by just 6.5 per cent. The challenge is to maintain that momentum and to get our unfair share of the market; ours and somebody else's, says Mr Finan.

CORPORATE BACKGROUND: Joined Pearl Assurance as an agent in 1959. Rose within the company to the level of main board director. In 1983, he left

to become chief executive and deputy chairman of NEL Britannia, the insurance arm of Invesco MIM, formerly Britannia Arrow. In 1992, Mr Finan was made managing director of Provident Life, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Wintertthur Swiss Insurance with assets of £30bn. In 1995, after over 100 years as Provident Life, the firm formally adopted the name of its parent company, Wintertthur Life UK. Wintertthur Group merged with Credit Suisse Group in 1997.

STRATEGY: To grow Wintertthur's three divisions. Wintertthur is the UK market



leader for self-invested personal pensions with around 50 per cent market share. Mr Finan says that the chal-

lenge is to consolidate and maintain leadership in this market. There has been rapid growth in the group pensions products business. Mr Finan sees scope for further substantial growth. Wintertthur serves the largest number of independently owned tied estate agents. It has 10-year deals with most of its 1,000 branches. These include the Haart estate agency chain, formerly Woolwich Property Services. The strength of the housing market is seen as "a tremendous opportunity" for the business. Mr Finan says 44 per cent of owners could switch their mortgage and get a better deal. Wintertthur has

set up a free personal financial services call centre offering remortgage terms within 15 minutes. Mr Finan wants to expand into areas such as Individual Savings Accounts and personal loans. Mr Finan says the group is looking at flexible staff benefits and hours.

PLANS: Wintertthur Life is one of the fastest-growing insurance companies in the UK, with a 29 per cent return on capital and after-tax profits of £4m in 1997. Mr Finan is working with European colleagues on group and individual pensions and the group is on the lookout for mergers and acquisitions in the life and pensions sector.



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KEEP

BY JONATHAN MILLER

Those British guys: they have some neat ideas but they know nothing about business. Well, that's what the software industry said until Charles Cornwall bought the cyberbabe Lara Croft and turned Eidos into a force to be reckoned with

The profits of Tomb and gloom

NOW HERE'S a recipe for sleepless nights. Start in an industry - say computer software - where your competitors include the likes of Bill Gates's Microsoft and Sooy Corporation. Bear in mind that British software companies have a reputation for being innovative, creative, exciting and hopeless at making money.

Next, specialise in computer game software, on the cutting edge of geek culture, which means you hire staff who don't know what a necktie is, who live on pizza and who would blend in seamlessly at a grunge-music festival.

Then market a range of products whose functionality is incomprehensible to all but adolescent and pre-adolescent males, few of them likely to have girlfriends - consumers whose fickleness is notorious and with the attention span of a gnat.

Finally, to finance this brilliant scheme, try to raise venture capital in Britain, where venture capital doesn't even mean venture capital but management buy-outs, in a market whose investors are notoriously averse to risk, and where investors have been burnt.

Alternatively, lie down in a darkened room until the feeling passes. But wait, maybe not.

Eidos, the British computer games publisher of cyberbabe Lara Croft, heroine of the Tomb Raider series of computer games, is riding high and making money. Last October its share price was at a 13-month low of 595p. Since then the company has produced strong third-quarter numbers which show turnover in the nine months to December rose by 64 per cent up to £169m, producing a profit before tax up 149 per cent to £32.4m. As prospects brightened, the firm's core executives have been visiting 15 cities in seven countries, making 90 presentations to 120 institutions.

Their story seems to have convinced. Today, Eidos is flavour of the month among investment analysts who have watched the computer game business double in size in 36 months, seeing Eidos emerge as a champion performer among British software houses. The culture is as much West Coast American as British, despite the unlikely location of its offices in Wimbledon, a middle-class London suburb that could hardly be further removed from Silicon Valley's wild west frontiers of technology.

One executive's first day at work was spent in shock from his first view of the open-plan office packed with new colleagues in old clothes, unkempt and straggly-haired. "It's true some of these guys have probably not been close to a bar of soap for a while, but they're good at what they do," he says.

It was not over thus. Four years ago, Eidos was a technology-led company attempting to cut a path in the arcane world of video compression - essentially, using software instead of expensive hardware to digitise images. When the chief executive, Charles Cornwall, arrived, the share price was roughly 30p. He liked the technology but despaired of it producing much in the

way of earnings. "We needed something else," he says. The answer was computer games.

Enter Lara Croft, the game that has gone on to sell more than 15 million copies worldwide. Other games, including Doom and Quake, have sold more but few rivals appear to have such long-term potential. This seems to be down largely to the incredible response of computer gamers to the character of Lara Croft herself, an Uzi-toting cyberbabe who lives in a baronial manor house and whose exploits have captivated millions of fans.

Lara was invented by a small design house called Core Design in Derby which Mr Cornwall promptly bought. Jeremy Heath-Smith, who founded Core Design, is now an executive director of Eidos. The highest-paid director of the company, he was paid £1.8 million last year and is now working on a fourth version of the game. Mr Cornwall, 36 and South African-born, has become a multi-millionaire, his 4 per cent shareholding now worth £15m, with options worth much more.

Yet the best, analysts say may be to come, with Paramount preparing to start shooting a movie version of Lara Croft. Lord Sainsbury of Turville, the technology minister, hailing Lara Croft as an "ambassador for British scientific excellence" and Eidos using Lara's notoriety to lever itself into the first rank of computer game companies.

"Eidos is doing really well," says Jeff Kaye, editor-in-chief of CTW, the computer game industry magazine. "They've exploited Lara well, and to get away from their reputation as a one-trick pony they're developing other titles including Championship Manager, which has really blown everything else away. They've got a good team at the top and though the City has had a hard time trying to figure out how to value this kind of company, the analysts are beginning to understand them and they're pretty high on them."

Perhaps most surprising of all, Eidos has begun to disprove the rule that British innovation is incompatible with commercial success.

"We're positive," says Robert Smithson, the Goldman Sachs sector analyst. "The secular trend is very good in the long term and the stock is cheap."

The secular trend, Mr Smithson explains, is that hardware sales keep growing. Eidos does not make hardware, but every time a games platform is sold, it gains potential customers. Although Mr Smithson acknowledges the volatility of the computer game product cycle, he believes that no current trends Eidos profits and shares ought to keep growing.

Eidos makes games for two main platforms: the Sooy Playstation, game console of choice among the digerati, and the ubiquitous PC, which in its latest manifestations is also capable of rendering the rich graphics that are a hallmark of Eidos's offerings.

The company's real milch cow is the Playstation, with 50 million sold world-wide. Sony controls manu-

facture of the cartridges used in the Playstation, but there is still plenty left over for Eidos. The gross margin on a sold game is close to 65 per cent.

The industry rumour is that Sony is about to slash the price of the console in the UK from £99 to £99. Sony's calculation is a classic "give away the razor, sell the blades" strategy. If the sums are right, this will be a big opportunity for Eidos. The typical Playstation customer buys eight games; trends show that some - perhaps the new Lara Croft game - will have the Eidos label. The price cut is preparation for next year's launch of the Playstation 2, a console 1,000 times more powerful than the present model.

Eidos has just won an award from Deloitte & Touche as the fastest-growing tech company in Britain. Up more than 200 per cent in six months, the shares still stand on what many regard as a relatively undemanding multiple of 14 times earnings.

Even Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, house broker to the company, wonders whether the story is "too good to be true", although it concludes that it isn't. Eidos shares reached £22.20 last week and volume and the number of quality investors are up.

Cornwall says the key to the business is that it is led by content although the technology is a vital component. "We are a digital media company interested in the creation of original content more than anything else. Thanks to Lara, we have reached the critical mass to have the credibility to attract new content."

A manifestation of this has been the frantic pace at which Eidos has been buying smaller software companies around Britain and cutting deals with others, ones with innovative ideas but not necessarily the publishing skills to bring them to market. The latest deal, announced last week, was a long-term publishing agreement with Free Radical Design, based in Nottingham which started this year. The company is run by the team who built the successful Goldeneye007 game for Nintendo. Its first product for Eidos will be released next year. David Doak, their managing director, says: "Eidos is a long-term player with an enviable track record and a clear view of where the industry is headed. Their board was refreshingly open and direct. Their passion for games clinched it."

In February, Eidos did a similar deal with Elixir Studios, a London-based games developer established last year by Demis Hassabis, who created a best-selling computer game called Theme Park when he was 16. Mr Hassabis wrote to 31 venture capital companies, but was offered meetings with only four. "As soon as they heard computer games they switched off," he says.

Mr Cornwall says the Elixir deal is the kind that will allow his company to continue to prosper in a hazardous market. "Yes, it is frustrating that venture capital is not understood in Britain but it is also an opportunity because this is a country with incredible talent. We have be-



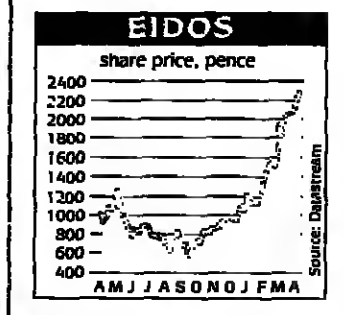
Lara Croft, hailed by the technology minister Lord Sainsbury of Turville as an 'ambassador for British scientific excellence'



Charles Cornwall (right), Jeremy Lewis and Mike McGarvey of Eidos play a game of Tomb Raider III

VITAL STATISTICS

Market capitalisation
£360m
Price 2200
Employees 590
CEO Charles H.D. Cornwall
Finance Director
Jeremy Lewis
COO Mike McGarvey
Chairman Ian Livingstone
Executive Director
Jeremy Heath-Smith



Colin Beere

come the mutant child of a film studio and a record company. We have a lot of individual developer relationships through equity stakes, outright ownership or contracts."

One key to the Eidos success is the even split of its senior team between bankers and technical wizards. Mr Cornwall and his finance director Jeremy Lewis are former bankers. Company chairman Ian Livingstone and executive director Jeremy Heath-Smith are the techies. The collaboration has been

manifestly fruitful, and they even appear to get along.

In a curious way, Eidos is itself becoming a venture capital house, identifying promising developers and helping them to get their products to market, often taking equity stakes. This is a unique business model, one that essentially puts Eidos in portfolio management.

The business is growing at 35 per cent annually with gross margins of 65 per cent on its products, which sell here for about £49 and in America

for around \$49. Eidos has also discovered that sequels to its hit games sell even better than the originals.

They claim second place among independent publishers of games for the Playstation, behind Electronic Arts, in the key markets of the US, UK, Germany and France. Earlier this year, in a move to position itself alongside high-multiple Internet stocks, Eidos announced a deal with Easynet Group PLC, the Internet service provider, to give its customers a free connection and in-

teractive gaming with other enthusiasts over the Web. "The Web is going to be like the first words Adam said to Eve, 'Stand back - I don't know how big this thing is going to get'," says Cornwall.

Perhaps, but Eidos has still to reach the dizzying multiples enjoyed by the American Internet stocks. Unlike many of them, it does make money. Investors hope Eidos enjoys the same success as the Garden of Eden appears to have been.

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All that glisters: For an insight into the wacky world of Goldman Sachs we recommend a visit to its website. It transpires that new-age philosophy underpins the success of our wealthiest bankers. "We are excited by your interest in Goldman Sachs," gushes the site (www.gs.com/recruiting). It expounds the bank's philosophy of "Minds. Wide Open." Say what? This is the cheesiest mission statement since Kentucky Fried Chicken re-launched itself as a vendor of "chicken-dominant meals for families". But Goldman likes it so much it has registered the phrase as a trademark. The website explains that it represents "open-architecture thinking". Still want to work there?

All in half a day's work: Spare a thought for the poor London-based investment bankers eking out an existence on paltry six-figure salaries. The Canary has news of one Baltimore-based financier who was in the market for a million-dollar house in Antigua. No sooner had he put down his deposit of \$65,000 (£39,000) than he was told by a friend that neighbouring Barbuda was actually the place to be. He immediately pulled out of the sale. "You realise," warned the English solicitor officiating, "that you will lose your deposit." "What do I care?" drawled the banker. "It's only half a day's work."

Going green, or red-faced: After our revelations that Reuters, the financial news and information company, is planning to send more staff to Devon, the Canary was inundated with calls from employees. "There are serious implications for the quality of our product," one caller told us. And serious implications for a load of Londoners that don't want to move to the West Country? An existing staffer at Tiverton also phoned, but sounded confused. "I knew there were plans for us to move," she said. "But I thought we were all moving to Exeter." It must be all the cider they drink down there.

Paribas lock-in: London staff of the French investment bank Paribas are being offered golden handcuffs to stay. This follows the £22bn hostile bid from Banque Nationale de Paris for Société Générale and Paribas. Paribas and Société Générale had been discussing a gentle coupling of their own, but now the atmosphere is tense. "The uncertainty and the acrimony is worse than anything else," says a Paribas trader. "The handcuffs will have to be pretty bloody shiny to get people to stay. Headhunters are sniffing about at every level." The Canary welcomes correspondence at canary@excite.co.uk

Miles Templeman
Managing Director,
Beer Company, Whitbread Plc
THE PERSON who stands out most clearly from the pack is David Thompson, chairman of Wolverhampton and Dudley. He guided them through the acquisition of Marstons. He is a businessman who brought his viewpoint into the industry on various topics and stuck to it in the face of contrasting opinion. He has a bold and broad approach. I'd also like to nominate Bobby Neame from Shepherd Neame. He gradually built up a family business and developed interesting beers against all the odds, because he is not a big player. He got his beers into the marketplace and managed to sustain interest in them. Bobby is also a prominent spokesman for us. He and his vice-chairman Stuart Neame have done great work for us in the duty battle. Personality is something that matters very much in our business - which really is the hospitality business. The more outward-going people tend to succeed. Both nominees have positive personal qualities.

Anthony Fuller
Chairman,
Fuller Smith and Turner Plc
MY NOMINEE is not a high-profile national player, but a regional stalwart - George Bateman of George Bateman and Sons. He managed to unite the family and the business in a time of massive crisis. A few years back, a part of the family was keen to sell, but George fought this and rallied his family. He made the right decision because the company went from strength to strength and they now own about 60 pubs. He has also managed to place their beer brands firmly on the brewing map. His success was due purely to his determination to succeed. He is a truly inspiring man. He had the long-term vision important to expanding a family business from one generation to the next - he's not just looking at instant profits like some of the pub breweries.

From Ebbe Dinesen
Chief Executive,
Carlsberg-Tetley Brewing Ltd
I OUGHT to nominate Captain J C Jacobsen, who first produced Carlsberg in 1847 with the declared aim to "develop the art of making beer to the greatest degree of perfection", but I'd prefer to nominate someone making an active contribution to today's industry. One I particularly respect is Stuart Neame, of the Kent brewers Shepherd Neame. Like us all, Stuart objects to the unfairly high levels of taxation on beer. But, as a regional brewer whose consumer heartland is worst affected by floods of cheap imports, Stuart has made righting this situation a personal crusade, and he has fought a tenacious and high-profile legal battle to overturn the Government's policies. I respect his stand and the passion he shares with everyone else who is a success in this industry, to produce quality products without compromising on the brewing art.

Simon Loftus
Chairman,
Adnams and Company Plc
THE BREWING industry is in turmoil partly because we have so few



Robert Neame (right), chairman of Shepherd Neame, with Jonathan and Stuart Neame

strong leaders with clear strategic vision and the confidence to stick to their objectives. So many companies allow themselves to be dominated by the short-term demands of institutional shareholders, and few companies have responded adequately to the needs and expectations of the consumer. This is particularly true of companies proud of brewing "real ale" - witness the demise of Marstons.

The keys to sustainable success are strong brands, effective and flexible systems, and highly motivated teams with a clear sense of purpose and a real commitment to customer satisfaction. The company

that has probably come closest to achieving these objectives is Fullers, under the leadership of Anthony Fuller and Michael Turner. In the not-too-distant future, I hope Adnams will also be a contender.

Tim Bridge
Chief Executive,
Greene King Plc
IT IS tricky to have to pick out someone specific in the industry because the business has changed, integrating other aspects of the hospitality trade rather than the purely linear business of brewing. But the management team that impressed me is running Fullers. The

combination of Anthony Fuller and Michael Turner has turned around the fortunes of the business and put it where it is now - occupying pride of place in London.

Jim Burrows
Chief Executive,
Brakspear and Sons Plc
I HAVE a high regard for David Thompson of Wolverhampton and Dudley, probably because of his impressive intellect. He is also passionate about beer, which is becoming increasingly rare in the business. David doesn't come from the production side, but he still has an absolute enthusiasm for beer

which is so important. I'd also like to nominate Mike Foster, Brakspear's new chairman. He's been with us for six months and as far as I can tell, he is bomb-proof - it is impossible to fuster him. He's a calm and collected individual, which is vital in any business.

James Arkell
Managing Director,
Arkells Brewery Ltd
THE PERSON who instantly springs to mind is Jasper Clutterbuck, who recently retired as chairman of Morlands. He was a former Whitbread director who took over Morlands when it was ailing - it had no

beer brand of its own and its tenants were unhappy. When he was in charge, Morlands was approached for takeover by one of those large predators, but Jasper fought them off and built up the brewery - they now have their famous brand, Old Speckled Hen. Thanks to him, it went from a sleepy family business into a decent-sized profitable company. As for people in the business at the moment, I much admire Anthony Fuller. He's flavour of the month because of his beers and his profitability. He managed to handle the families involved and he's kept them all interested and united. He's also a fighter for the brewers' business and chairman of several trade organisations. There was a traditional divide between family-owned companies and national breweries and he managed to present a united front to the Government for both sides of the industry.

David Goodwin
Chairman,
Camra
WE AT Camra admire three breweries in England at the moment for three different reasons. The Neames at Shepherd Neame are doing great work promoting the harmonisation of beer duty across Europe - they are losing a lot of money through bootleggers who pop across to France for cheaper alcohol. Then there's Wolverhampton and Dudley in the charge of David Thompson. It has shown outstanding commitment to the community and oversized glasses so the customer always gets a full pint. And finally, Fullers, under the aegis of Anthony Fuller, which has been extremely successful in promoting real ales.

Robert Neame
Chairman,
Shepherd Neame Ltd
THE MAN who most impresses me is Brian Stewart at Scottish and Newcastle. The moves Scottish has made with him at the helm have been superbly timed to position the company at the forefront of the business. The industry is changing to integrate other hospitality-based businesses, but Brian has ensured Scottish and Newcastle hasn't become absorbed in the leisure area to the cost of its brewing base. His clear vision helped rejuvenate our trade organisation, BLRA, and helped him to remain a spokesman for the industry while still being an architect of its reconstruction for the 21st century.

Michael Watts
Chief Executive,
Morland Plc
THE INDUSTRY is made up from many diverse companies, but those who stand out for me are Brian Stewart of Scottish and Newcastle, who has turned a regional company into the largest national, Miles Templeman of Whitbread is also a man from the top end of the business who deserves praise for developing Stella Artois into one of the most popular beers in the country. Stuart Neame of Shepherd Neame has to be mentioned because he's fighting a cause for the industry - to streamline British beer duties with European ones.

INTERVIEWS BY
SALLY CHATTERTON

MY FAVOURITE RESTAURANT

Green gourmet goes organic

DALE VINCE is managing director of The Renewable Energy Company, the UK's first and Europe's largest Green electricity supplier. For him, business is an extension of his environmental beliefs.

So his favourite restaurant is Woodruffs Organic Café in Stroud, Gloucestershire, which claims to be the country's first 100 per cent organic eatery. "I like organic stuff but I'm also a bit of a fussy eater and they can cater for me. I'm a vegan and I recently



gave up eating wheat after not eating any while I was in Kyoto for the climate conference. I'm feeling much better for it."

Whether for a mid-morning snack of boney and porridge, made with organic oats and soya milk, or lunch of a Thai curry or Italian fennel bake, he says he doesn't have to pay more than £5 at Woodruffs but "you certainly get full up".

The people who run the café are "enthusiastic about what they do and the cooking is fantastic".

Vince, 37, is not keen on doing business in London, though having recently signed a deal with Thames Water,

worth £50m a year, he finds himself having to visit the capital about twice a month.

He prefers conducting business in Stroud, where he is based, and says he would have no hesitation about taking business associates for lunch at Woodruffs. But he adds: "It's not as pleasant as doing the job. I prefer to get down to the issues. You can do too much winning and dining."

Woodruffs, 24 High Street, Stroud, Glos (01453 762350)

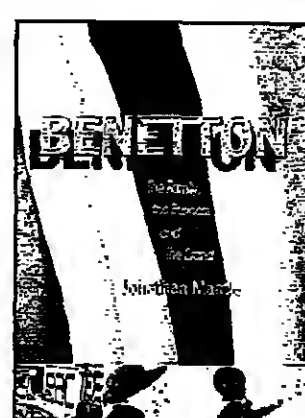
BOOK OF THE WEEK

Family fortune's rise and fall

Benetton. The Family, the Business and the Brand by Jonathan Mantle (Little Brown, £17.99)

BENETTON the book is a bit like Benetton the brand. It starts with colour, freshness, and is full of interest. It grows into something comprehensive, international, vibrant, stimulating and challenging. It finishes as something slightly confused, losing authority and leaving lots of questions unanswered.

What really happened to sales volumes, year on year, and country by country, as the brand lost its way, and allowed Gap and others to take the high ground of added value, mass market fashion? To judge from the book there was little change in the inexorable growth of business on a global scale. The closing of stores and the bankruptcy of franchisees is presented as a temporary adjustment. It is justified, in a phrase that is unfortunate in the light of recent developments, as "cleaning the system".



The supply chain innovations - dyeing whole garments after they had been made - and the realtime Electronic Point of Sale systems developed by the in-house IT maestro, Professor Zuccaro, are covered with insight and plenty of background colour. This is the pioneering period for Benetton, when their two seasons a year, with the ability to react quickly with flash orders, were revolutionising the clothing industry. Once Gap arrive on the

scene the book is muted on the company's response.

The book is very good on the family origins, and the evolution and development of the brand. The story of Leone - the father who bravely left for Albania to secure the family's future - to return home broken in health with malaria, and unable to provide as he would have wished for his family, is touchingly told.

Luciano Benetton, the oldest of the four children, took up the mantle, at the age of 10, of the family's chief breadwinner. His younger sister, Giuliana, even then extremely talented in clothing design and make-up, made nearly all the clothes for the family.

Luciano left school early, worked in a clothing store, and began to sell the colourful and original sweaters that Giuliana had produced in her spare time. The sales grew and grew, work was subcontracted, and stores selling their goods exclusively were eventually opened. The Benetton franchise system was unusual, but in the early

and major growth stages at least, highly effective.

The book also deals well with the development of Edizione, the totally family-owned holding company that diversified into other areas, and became a big player in Italian business. In addition, some of the darker sides of business development are handled well, including the sometimes breathtaking shenanigans that went on in Benetton Formula One motor racing (particularly those involving Michael Schumacher).

Overall, *Benetton* is a book that is both engaging and illuminating. For full satisfaction, it is perhaps best to approach it as an excellent holiday read, with business side benefits, rather than a must-read piece of business education.

TIM DRAKE

Tim Drake co-founded Cobra Sports in 1979, and sold it in 1982, when it was turning over £17m. He is now a retail strategy consultant and an author.

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Everyone out of step in the housing market

THERE MAY not seem to be much of an immediate connection, but the news that the Bradford & Bingley mutualise seems a good moment to revisit the strange and so far unexplained mystery of the divergent house price indices. For many years there have been two prominent indices that track changes in house prices in England & Wales. Both are prepared by prominent mortgage lenders - one by the Halifax, the other by the Nationwide Building Society. For many years, it was difficult to find much daylight between the results. Suddenly, about two to three years ago, something strange occurred. The two indices began to march at a quite different pace. For most of the past two years, house prices as recorded by the Nationwide have been growing substantially faster than those recorded by the Halifax.

In the third quarter of 1997, the Nationwide index recorded that prices were 12.5 per cent higher than they had been 12 months previously. According to the Halifax, however, the annual rate of increase was barely half that amount, 6.6 per cent. For three quarters in a row the rate of increase shown by the first index was more than double that shown by the second. Although the gap has narrowed a little more recently, the divergent readings of the Halifax and Nationwide indices continues. Confused? You are not the only one. The divergence between the two indices is noteworthy because the two series had so closely tracked each other before. The fact that they are now marching in different directions casts an obvious doubt over their reliability as an indicator of what is happening to prices and economic activity in this country.

The difference is important, not just to impatient homeowners, but to economic policymakers as well. House price inflation is one of the key indicators the Bank of England monitors in setting interest rates. Having been embarrassed a year ago into a misguided interest rate change by rogue readings from the statistics on average earnings, the Bank's monetary policy committee has been concerned to try to find out what has gone wrong with the house price indices on which they were once happy to rely.



JONATHAN DAVIS

It's surprising that the statisticians are failing to use the one thing that could help unravel the house price mystery, which is common sense

Nationwide typically lends money on more properties in the richer South, whereas the Halifax is more heavily concentrated in the North and Midlands. The statistical analysis is quite conclusive, however, that this is not the cause of the divergence in the price indices. (Common sense would suggest that if this were the cause, it would have shown up before the 1997 hiatus.) Both indices, it should be said, were constructed with the advice of outside experts and are based on sufficiently large samples to produce statistically significant results.

The conclusion of the various expert speakers at the seminar was that the divergence in the house price indices remains, officially, a mystery. So concerned has the Bank itself become that it has started its own house-price index, based on data held at the Land Registry. The advantage of this data is that it is based on actual prices paid for properties, including those bought with cash. The Halifax and Nationwide indices by contrast are based on the prices borrowers have agreed to pay at the mortgage application stage.

By definition, the data in their two indices excludes the 25 per cent or so of properties that are bought without a mortgage each year. The drawback of the Bank index is that the Land Registry data does not include the detailed breakdown of transactions by type and size of house that the two building society samples provide. So it provides very few meaningful explanations of how and why house prices are changing. For the record, however, the Land Registry data suggests that house prices are, in fact, rising at a rate which is about halfway between that recorded by the Halifax and the Nationwide.

Should you invest in... pharmaceutical companies?

BY KEIRON ROOT

THE PHARMACEUTICALS sector has been a source of strong growth, despite the potentially high-risk nature of a business heavily dependent on research and development of new products, and patent protection. The more mature business of chemicals manufacture has also been largely out of favour. Glenn Meyer of Pavilion Asset Management says: "The two sectors seem to act in opposition. Pharmaceuticals are generally growth stocks and chemical companies tend to be highly cyclical. Pharmaceuticals have a much clearer and longer flow of earnings, and the chemical sector moves in line with the world economy and is much more volatile."

Jeremy Batstone of NatWest Stockbrokers has a different focus. "Pharmaceuticals have been very volatile and the sector has tended to lag the market," he says. "People are looking more for value as the economy has improved, away from more defensive growth areas like pharmaceuticals." Mark Mathias, head of investment funds at Rea Brothers Investment Management, agrees the sector's long-term growth potential is undisputed. Mathias, whose firm runs two specialist pharmaceutical funds, says: "There is the trend to ageing populations in the OECD countries, with the highest proportion of lifetime healthcare expenditure coming in the last two years of life, underpinned by the significant increase in healthcare research

expenditure. At the same time, the OECD governments are trying to rein in the cost of government-subsidised healthcare and the way you do that is to spend more on drugs to keep people out of hospital." North America's political debate about state-funded medical programmes has added to the uncertainty, says Nigel Thomas, manager of ABN Amro's UK Growth Fund. "Proposed legislation in Medicare reform will limit spending on outpatient drug costs for elderly people who account for over 30 per cent of US outpatient drug spending and this will affect pharmaceutical companies - the FT suggests it would impact earnings by between 10 and 15 per cent." Thomas says the plans will probably not come to fruition but the debate is affecting share prices. "It is a political hot potato but given the Republican position in Congress, we are not so sure it will be enacted."



A technician at work for Glaxo Wellcome, one of the biggest stocks in the pharmaceuticals sector

Size is also going to be a key element in future corporate earnings. "When it comes down to it, healthcare is not an optional expenditure and the amounts spent on it are going to rise," adds Mathias. "There is very good long-term earnings visibility in the pharmaceutical sector and mergers of large companies. You can sell the same drugs into different markets, and IT helps keep control in multinational companies."

By contrast, the bulk of investor interest in the drugs sector is focused on the largest stocks. Nigel Thomas says: "There aren't that many pure pharmaceutical companies below £1bn in size. Shire Pharmaceuticals and Medeva, with Galen in Ireland, are the only mid-sized ones and once below a certain size they are largely bio-techs, of which we like Celtech and Phytopharm."

Jeremy Batstone adds: "There are a lot of stocks in the sector relatively cheap, with the possible exception of AstraZeneca. Glaxo Wellcome still looks good value at around £19. We would suggest it could get up to maybe £21.50 or £22 in the short to medium term."

Another key player in the sector is SmithKline Beecham, where investors were holding off until the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) ruled on Avandia, its new diabetes treatment. Last week Batstone adds: "The ruling was positive and SmithKline could be looking at sales of \$1.5bn to \$2bn."

SHAREWATCH

BUY

The fall in Kingfisher's price since the merger with Asda was announced reflects a basic misunderstanding of the medium term benefits, reckons investor Henderson Crosthwaite, which ranks the shares (746p) a strong buy. The deal would also enhance Kingfisher's earnings 14 per cent to around 36p, putting the shares on a multiple of less than 21 times (compared with 28 times before the news). The broker reckons Wal-Mart is more interested in Continental expansion, especially in Germany, while a rival bid from Europe is also seen as unlikely. For those who carp about Kingfisher buying into a lower-growth and lower-rated food company, the derating has already taken place.

Buy Handover International (116p), a small, emerging four-star hotel company, which is set for steady expansion over the next few years, says Teather & Greenwood. The shares do look very undervalued, with the company's net asset value per share of 226p well ahead of the price.

NO PAIN, NO GAIN: OUR MAN'S PORTFOLIO

Four go up and only one down



DEREK PAIN

FOUR of the six shares tipped since this column was launched two months ago are recording gains. One is unchanged and the other is, sadly, showing a loss. Although the Pain portfolio is intended to offer a long-term investment strategy it is still satisfying to achieve more short-term hits than misses. I remain content with the first half-a-dozen tips but must admit to the odd pang of anxiety over Regal Hotel, the nation's third largest hotel chain. Regal, which was the first share to be selected for the portfolio, is the one lurking in the dumps. From a price of 29.5p it has fallen to 26.5p, even touching 25.5p for a time. As far as I am aware nothing untoward has occurred. Profits, if not spectacular, were satisfactory, the report and accounts moderately encouraging. Yet Regal's decline has taken place in a generally more positive climate for the hotel industry, underlined by an unsuccessful bid approach to Jarvis Hotels, and Millennium & Copthorne's ambitious £566m overseas expansion.

Gowings, the Burger King fast food restaurants to car dealing group, is the unchanged share, losing a modest gain to settle at 103.5p. Paramount, the pubs chain, emerges as the early star of the

portfolio. Recommended at 15p, the shares moved quickly to 22.5p. They are now 21p. In stock market terms Paramount is regarded as an "illiquid" share, so turnover is not published. But with the market short of stock, market makers were caught on the hop. Montana, the London restaurant chain, has moved from 182.5p to 195.5p. It did for a time top 200p. It is my one Ofex constituent. The lightly regulated fringe market can be high risk. But it can also produce some real gems. My blue chip stocks have performed well, with speculation about various forms of corporate action making a significant contribution. Safeway has, not surpris-

ingly, been caught up in the rumours swirling around the retail sector and has surged from 248p to 272.5p. Wal-Mart, the US giant retailer, and Royal Ahold, the Dutch supermarket chain, are regarded as the most likely predators. Allied Domecq, interim figures tomorrow, is once again feeling the pressure of speculation about a demerger or perhaps, the much-needed spirits link with another international player. From a 482.5p tip price the shares have frothed to 521p, despite what is expected to be a weak profits display. Although it is rarely wrong to take a profit I can see no urgent need to ditch Safeway or Allied. Even if the speculative excitement fades and corporate action fails to materialise there is always another day. Both groups have to pull their corporate socks up or they will be taken out of their misery. The two shares continue to offer the comfort of accommodating dividend yields in these low interest-rate days. Safeway is on 5 per cent and Allied 4.8 per cent.

PAIN'S PORTFOLIO

	Price tipped	Latest price
Allied Domecq	482.5p	521.0p
Gowings	103.5p	103.5p
Montana	182.5p	197.5p
Paramount	15.0p	21.0p
Regal Hotel	29.5p	26.5p
Safeway	248.0p	272.5p

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Spread your bets across the market

STOCK markets climb ever skyward, breaking new highs week after week, savers who are not invested in equities must be feeling pretty sick.

But successful investing is not about sticking some money in a few companies' shares, standing back and watching it grow. In fact, unless you have an excellent stockbroker, now the inside track on a company or are prepared to devote a considerable amount of time and effort to monitoring your investments, putting money directly into the stock market could leave you with a sour taste in your mouth and a considerably smaller nest-egg.

The trick is - as the investment industry's mantra goes - not to keep all your eggs in one basket. Diversification is the name of the game. And for most people, unless you have hundreds of thousands of pounds to invest, the best route to stock market success is likely to be through a collective investment scheme such as a unit trust or investment trust.

What nearly all of those in this position are looking for is to build a balanced investment portfolio. The creation of any investment portfolio begins with two fundamental questions - what objectives are you trying to achieve with this capital, and what level of risk are you willing to take in planning a suitable investment strategy?

Overwhelmingly, the two primary objectives will be to generate income and to achieve capital growth. With the balance between the two determined by the circumstances of the individual concerned. Much of the choice between the two will depend on personal goals. You may wish to build more capital for retirement, to boost current income, or perhaps to save for a specific purpose or event.

By CLAIRE BURSTON

For most people, balance will be the operative word when it comes to choosing the investment funds.

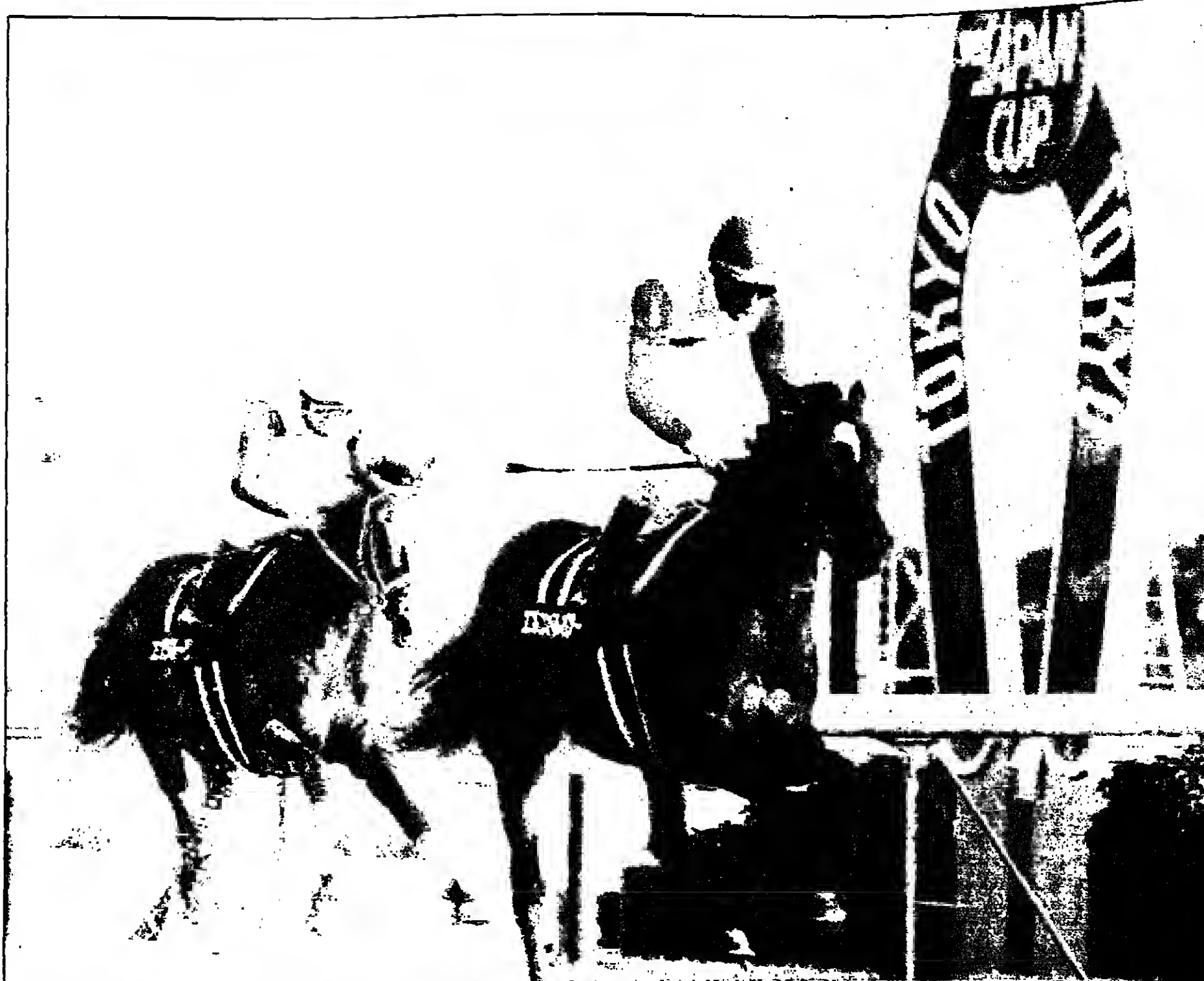
Graham Bates, of the independent financial adviser Bates Investment Services, in Leeds, says: "Your investment portfolio should be anchored with a solid core of fixed interest securities that will provide a predictable return. But clearly, a sensible investment strategy will also include an element of equity investment, to be held over the long term, since equities have historically proved to far outperform the relatively modest growth of both cash deposits and securities."

Today's increasingly knowledgeable and sophisticated investors are familiar with the principle that risk tends to rise in direct proportion to returns, but "risk" in the investment arena can be interpreted in many ways.

As far as equities are concerned, in its strictest sense risk can be literal. The value of an equity investment can go down as well as up, so that if for any reason you are obliged to sell an equity holding at a time when its price is lower than you originally paid, you will make a loss.

"For cautious investors, it may not be this ultimate risk that frightens them away from the markets, but simply the prospect of volatility and unpredictability that at their worst can make equity investment something of a rollercoaster ride," says Bates. "The key is to appreciate the different levels of equity risk."

The developed stock markets of the UK, US and continental Europe are likely to provide far greater stability than you would expect from less developed and more unpredictable markets such as Latin



Equity investment can be a rollercoaster ride but putting money into Japanese stock market funds has returned 40 per cent in the past year

AP

America or the Asian countries. Economic and market cycles have always produced ups and downs in equity values and almost certainly always will. The table below illustrates this point and shows which unit trust sectors have been the best and worst performers over the past three years.

The average Japanese fund has been the best-performing over the past year, returning 40 per cent, but over three years it has lost almost 18 per cent, making it the 21st worst-performing sector out of 25.

Most investors' portfolios are heavily weighted towards the UK

by 53.86 per cent and over five years the return from the three-way split was 107.99 per cent, the UK average fund growing 28.67 per cent.

So where do you start? Peter Jeffrey, managing director at leading fund analysts Standard & Poor's Fund Research, says: "The key to a good fund is one which is managed by someone who has developed a sound and disciplined investment process and sticks to it. The process must be applied consistently. A good fund manager will also apply risk controls so the fund will not deviate too much from a benchmark. It is important to give investors as close to

the market return as possible."

Choice is clearly critical. But in an already crowded financial marketplace, making the right choices can be difficult. There are more than 2,000 unit trusts on offer. The choice of products is changing and expanding all the time, equity markets rise and fall, and interest rates fluctuate. Regular monitoring is vital. Your objectives and circumstances may also change.

In principle, creating and managing the right investment portfolio is straightforward: objectives and risks; balance and diversification; selection, good advice, monitoring

and management. In practice, it is complicated hugely by the confusion of choice and the vagaries of change.

Today we start a regular column which should help you not only to pick funds from the vast array on offer, but also enable you to monitor your portfolio once those investments have been made.

With the help of Standard & Poor's Fund Research I will look at sectors, regions and themes, picking out the funds to give the savvy investor some useful ideas as both a starting point and to aid your portfolio development.

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HOW MANAGED FUNDS HAVE FARED

	1 year %	2 year %	3 Year %
Japan	40.1	16.95	-17.77
Far East Including Japan	19.36	-9.53	-19.96
North America	17.53	65.66	71.99
UK Gilt	11.88	28.35	39.49
International Equity Growth	10.64	38.41	42.63
Far East Excluding Japan	9.63	-23.92	-28.48
International Equity & Bond	9.5	32.47	37.54
UK Fixed Interest	8.88	27.06	42.2
UK Equity & Bond	8.75	47.48	68.82
International Fixed Interest	8.66	15.01	11.88
Managed Fund	7.88	35.38	47.55
UK Growth & Income	7.66	45.1	69.01
International Equity Income	7.66	43.94	54.28
UK Equity Growth	6.49	41.08	63.72
UK Equity & Bond Income	6.39	36.41	56.37
UK Equity Income	5.62	42.52	66.5
Fund of Funds	5.41	28.96	35.75
Money Market	4.74	10.09	15.13
Property	4.02	20.7	40.29
Europe	3.28	48.47	66.45
Investment Trust Units	0.65	25.54	37.98
UK Smaller Companies	-2.76	14.43	31.03
Index Bear	-4.07	-29.22	-38.65
Commodity & Energy	-10.3	-32.7	-41.09
Emerging Markets	-12.8	-20.3	-16.83

Source: Standard & Poor's Micropal to March 1999

MY BIGGEST MISTAKE: JEFF STANTON

Quick solutions prove costly

MY BIGGEST mistake was to act too quickly without consulting my staff. I would put that mistake down to the impetuosity of youth: it occurred when I was 36 and had just taken a role as a financial manager. When I got there, I was amazed. It had a Dickensian approach: I had inherited a financial department of about 40 people, split into 15 individual sections in about 10 offices. There were lots of partitions.

I had been there for about a month and thought it was ridiculous. The first thing was to make a smaller number of larger sections, so I talked to the office manager and we decided to actually break down the barriers physically. We didn't tell anyone, but we came in on a weekend and did it. When everyone came in on Monday, the partitions were down and the desks - which had been facing the front, like a school room - were rearranged.

My thinking was: this is good and everybody will be very

Jeff Stanton, 50, trained as a chartered accountant, joining Hotpoint and moving to Currys, where he became finance director in 1982. He subsequently became director of rental firm Granada and was headhunted as chief executive of business services firm Cert plc



pleased. It was funny on the Sunday, but not on the Monday. I had a deposition from the staff, who were very upset. They said they needed their offices for privacy. They also said that if they faced each other, germs would spread more quickly, and this would cause serious problems. I had to decide whether to say, "This is a load of rubbish", or whether to backpedal a bit and say, "I should

have consulted you". It was a company that had been doing things a particular way for a long time.

In the end, everybody accepted it had been a stupid situation, but nobody had had the wherewithal to do anything about it because they felt too many people would be upset. My job, after the change, was to use some charm and say, "I've done it now: let's see how

it goes." The problems could have been avoided by taking things more slowly: it was about managing change. I can't remember people skills being part of my accountancy course.

It was a lesson for the future, and as I have changed roles and become more senior and been involved in acquisitions, I've learnt that things are never what you expect. At one company, I took over a similar company and we spent ages producing a detailed plan, only to find it wasn't exactly what we anticipated. I have learnt to say, count to 10, and don't try to change anything until you have been working in that environment for a length of time.

At Cert, we acquired a new sales business last August and we committed to the people we bought it from that we would not change until 1999. Until you are involved in the business, you cannot understand it. It's easy to come up with a quick answer that proves to be an expensive mistake.

BEST AND WORST PERFORMING UNIT TRUSTS

BEST PERFORMING OVER ONE YEAR
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

Rank	Fund	Value
1	S&P Korea	2,161.12
2	Schroder Seoul	2,104.45
3	Fidelity Asia Pacific	2,085.99
4	Investec Far East Asia	1,927.96
5	Investec Far East Asia	1,901.80

WORST PERFORMING OVER ONE YEAR

Rank	Fund	Value
1532	S&P Southern Africa	646.00
1533	Scotti Emerging Markets	642.46
1534	Scotti Emerging Markets	624.14
1535	Perpetual Latin America	618.62
1536	S&P Latin America	609.90

BEST PERFORMING OVER THREE YEARS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

Rank	Fund	Value
1	Fidelity American	3,150.61
2	Jupiter US Growth	2,262.73
3	TD European	2,110.67
4	Old Mutual North American	2,143.33
5	Fidelity American Special	2,131.96

WORST PERFORMING OVER THREE YEARS

Rank	Fund	Value
1344	Mercury Gold & General	484.03
1345	Carters Gold & Int Resources	467.63
1346	MEAS Gold	412.02
1347	Old Mutual Thailand	295.39
1348	S&P Gold & Exploration	217.71

BEST PERFORMING OVER FIVE YEARS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

Rank	Fund	Value
1	Fidelity American	4,441.71
2	Aberdeen Technology	4,257.54
3	GA North American Growth	4,009.51
4	Fidelity American Special	3,570.70
5	Edinburgh North American	3,404.00

WORST PERFORMING OVER FIVE YEARS

Rank	Fund	Value
1124	Edinburgh Latin American	519.65
1125	Schroder Japanese Sm Cos	490.38
1126	Old Mutual Thailand	389.94
1127	Growth US Small	373.80
1128	S&P Gold & Exploration	364.28

BEST PERFORMING OVER TEN YEARS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

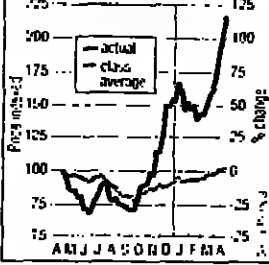
Rank	Fund	Value
1	Aberdeen Technology	10,669.98
2	Fidelity American	9,187.21
3	GA North American Growth	9,103.22
4	Henderson Global Technology	7,879.20
5	Edinburgh North American	7,574.63

WORST PERFORMING OVER TEN YEARS

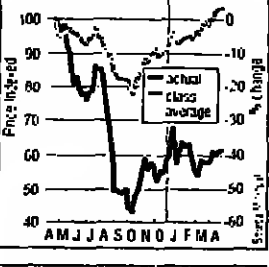
Rank	Fund	Value
732	Henderson Japan	642.27
733	NSDC Japanese Index	612.93
734	Investec Japanese Gth	568.46
735	MEAS Japan	502.35
736	Barclays Japan	421.72

Source: Standard & Pears/Micropal

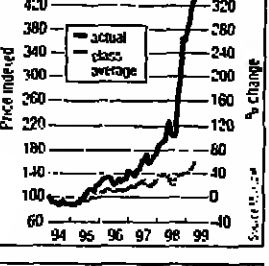
S&P KOREA
Best unit trust over one year



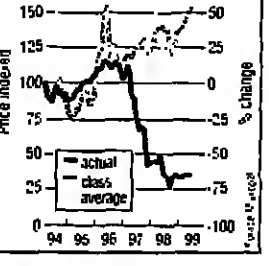
S&P NEW EUROPE
Worst unit trust over one year



FIDELITY AMERICAN
Best unit trust over five years



S&P GOLD & EXPLORATION
Worst unit trust over five years



BEST AND WORST PERFORMING INVESTMENT TRUSTS

BEST PERFORMING OVER ONE YEAR
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

Rank	Fund	Value
1	INVESTEC Japan Discovery Wts	4,521.74
2	Battlefield Asia Pacific Wts	2,183.76
3	Aberdeen New Power Wts	2,558.46
4	Fidelity Japanese Values Wts	2,407.41
5	Schroder Korea Fund	2,306.48

WORST PERFORMING OVER ONE YEAR

Rank	Fund	Value
496	Two Mountains Wts	231.68
497	First Russian Frontiers	230.46
498	City of Oxford Wts	146.34
499	First Russian Frontiers Wts	117.65
500	Central European Gth Wts	12.09

BEST PERFORMING OVER THREE YEARS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

Rank	Fund	Value
1	Fleming Inc & Co-Cap (2000) W	17,916.67
2	Jupiter Extra Inc Wts	8,000.00
3	Jew - Cap (2004)	5,665.23
4	Darwin Wts	5,333.33
5	Franklin Dual-Cap (1999)	5,101.25

WORST PERFORMING OVER THREE YEARS

Rank	Fund	Value
430	Pacific Assets Wts	151.69
431	Henderson Japanese Sm Cos Wts	141.30
432	Edinburgh Java Wts	75.00
433	Aberdeen New Power C Wts	42.55
434	Central European Gth Wts	7.68

BEST PERFORMING OVER FIVE YEARS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

Rank	Fund	Value
1	Franklin Dual-Cap (1999)	7,973.19
2	Jew - Cap (2004)	5,250.72
3	For & Co Enterprise	4,748.18
4	J. Fry Utilities Ord (2003)	3,343.91
5	Jos Holdings - Cap (2003)	3,302.20

WORST PERFORMING OVER FIVE YEARS

Rank	Fund	Value
313	City of Oxford Wts	115.38
314	Perpetual Japanese Sm Cos Wts	99.36
315	Henderson Japanese Sm Cos Wts	91.55
316	Central European Gth Wts	6.67
317	Central European Gth Wts	1,480.28/317

BEST PERFORMING OVER TEN YEARS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer-bid basis, net income

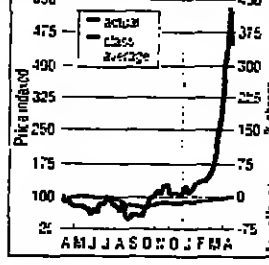
Rank	Fund	Value
1	For & Co Enterprise	10,829.67
2	Franklin Dual-Cap (1999)	10,026.03
3	Jupiter Japanese Growth	6,359.77
4	Canadair	6,322.96
5	Rights & Issues Inc (2001)	5,761.19

WORST PERFORMING OVER TEN YEARS

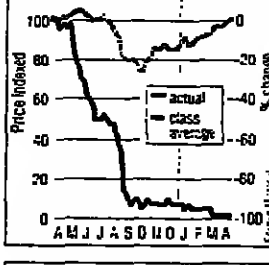
Rank	Fund	Value
110	For & Co Enterprise	924.70
111	Trust of Property Shares	834.72
112	Norco-Europe Fund	428.16
113	INVESTEC Enterprise	407.67
114	Thompson Trust	284.20

Source: Standard & Pears/Micropal

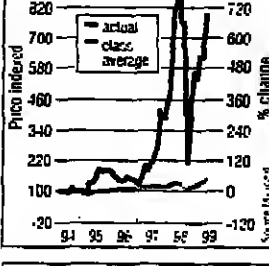
INVESTEC JAPAN DISCOVERY WARRANTS
Best investment trust over one year



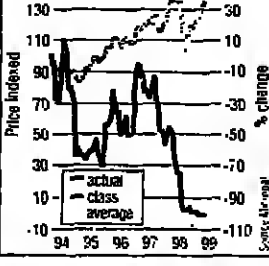
CENTRAL EUROPEAN GROWTH WARRANTS
Worst investment trust over one year



FRANKLIN DUAL-CAP (1999)
Best investment trust over five years



CENTRAL EUROPEAN GROWTH WARRANTS
Worst investment trust over five years



FAR EAST EXCLUDING JAPAN FUNDS

BEST PERFORMING UNIT TRUSTS/OEICs
Initial £1,000 lump sum, offer to bid basis

Rank	Unit Trust/OEIC	Value
1	Fidelity American	2,085.99
2	Fidelity American Special	1,927.96
3	Investec Far East Asia	1,901.80
4	Investec Far East Asia	1,901.80
5	Investec Far East Asia	1,901.80

WORST PERFORMING UNIT TRUSTS/OEICs

Rank	Unit Trust/OEIC	Value
1114	Schroder US Smaller Companies	817.36
1115	Franklin American Smaller Cos	801.50
1116	Schroder Int US Smaller Cos	801.50
1117	Barclays American Smaller Cos	779.59
1118	Growth American Smaller Cos	684.31

BEST PERFORMING INVESTMENT TRUSTS
Initial £1,000 lump sum, mid-price to mid-price

Rank	Investment Trust	Value
1	Edinburgh US Tracker	1,237.50
2	Edinburgh US Tracker	1,032.74
3	For & Co US Smaller Cos	1,031.70
4	US Smaller Cos	1,031.62
5	US Smaller Cos	925.29

WORST PERFORMING INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Rank	Investment Trust	Value
4	Fleming American	1,031.62
5	US Smaller Cos	925.29
6	North Atlantic Smaller Cos	801.16
7	American Opportunity	760.54
8	Flaming US Discovery	678.90

Source: Standard & Pears/Micropal

BEST AND WORST PERFORMING STOCK MARKETS

Best and Worst Global Equity Indices

Index	one month	one year
Best		
Northern Stock Market	43.08	37.39
Northern Composite	36.32	27.52
Northern Europe	36.70	24.17
Sing. S&P 500	31.27	10.35
Argentina Merval Index	26.13	-41.28
China SE Shanghai A	25.39	-6.46
Hong Kong Stock	25.26	-29.81
Philippines Composite	23.69	-10.71
Northern Index	18.72	-13.15
Colombia Stock Market	16.31	-55.62
Worst		
Panama Stock General	0.65	10.43
South Africa	0.52	-0.41
KFX Copenhagen Share	0.39	-18.59
China SE Shanghai B	-3.12	-29.61
China SE Shanghai A	-3.02	-74.57
China SE Shanghai B	-3.08	-8.84
China SE Shanghai A	-2.74	-19.37
Portugal PS-20	-5.27	-19.37
India Sensex 30	-9.42	-11.94
India NSE-50	-10.18	-11.53

Source: Bloomberg

NEW SHARE PRICE HIGHS

Shares that have hit a new 52 week intraday high in the past week

Company	Price	Company	Price	Company	Price
3i Group	710	HSBC Hldgs	2352	Portsmouth	1975
Aberdeen Asset	141.5	Hughes (TJ)	357	Redwood Group	247.5
Aberdeen New Day	143	Dorling Kindersley	372.5	Ricardo Group	305.5
Aberdeen New Day	52.5	Eastnet Group	557.5	Rio Tinto	1079.5
Acad	495	EBG Group	77	RPC Group	201.5
Acorn Inc Fund	108	Edinburgh Oregon	63.75	Russell Alexander	167.5
Adscene Group	221.5	Edinburgh Int	109.5	Sadch & Spatch	227.5
Albany Int Ltd	220.5	Edinburgh US Int	633.5	Savills	160.5
Alzheim	44	Edos	2317.5	Schroder Asia Pa	65.75
Allied Lond PFI	92.5	Elec Boutique	107	Schroder Korea	8.5
Amec	271.5	Elec Int Trst	755.5	Schroder Venture	230
Ameco Overseas	617	EP&L Group	7.25	Scottish Asian	155
Anglo Amer Pst	12.44	Farview Hldgs	134.5	Scottish Int & Tr	407
Arcoman	18.25	Farview Hldgs	134.5	Scottish Orient	57.5
Artisan (UK)	7	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Second Alliance	281.5
Aust Opt Int Tr	91.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Seindoes	279.5
Baldwins Int Srv	184.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	SGB Group	273.5
Barclays	1993	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Signet Group	57.5
Barlows	67.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Smallco-Lns Ld S	221.5
Barrett Dev	376.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Smith (Wth) Group	192.5
Batm Adv Comm	587.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Sports Internat	73.5
Bentford	268	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Tadpole Tech	26
BGI End Fd III	104.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Taiwan Invest Tr	94
Biogen Pharma	335.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Taylor Nelson	173.5
Bown & Johnson	123.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Ted Baker	196.5
Brands Hatch	357.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Brent Int	121.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Brit Sky Broadca	561.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Britannia Group	47.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Brown & Johnson	122.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Bryant Group	147	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Calia	184.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Calluna	3	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Cambridge WA-NV	292.5	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Cambridge Water	395	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Cap Radio	835	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Cap Radio	835	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627
Cap Radio	835	Fid Asian Values	78.25	Temple Bar II	627

Source: Bloomberg

NEW LOWS

Shares that have hit a new 52 week intraday low in the past week

Company	Price	Company	Price	Company	Price
AEA Technology	319.5	Integrat Asset M	27.5	Ross Group	2
Antonov	41	Jasmin	89.5	Scottish Power	496
Blick	180	Leopold Hldgs	515	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520
Bolton	802.5	Medias Road	8.5	Secure TR Bank	520

Source: Bloomberg

PERMANENT INTEREST-BEARING SHARES

PERMANENT INTEREST-BEARING SHARES			
FUND	STAMPON (THOUSANDS)	PRICE (pence)	YIELD (percent) (pence)
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	188
British	11	10.000	210
British	11	1.000	201
British	11 ¹ / ₂	1.000	191 ¹ / ₂
British	12 ¹ / ₂	1.000	208
British	10 ¹ / ₂	1.000	175
British	12 ¹ / ₂	1.000	207
British	12 ¹ / ₂	1.000	212

PERPETUAL INDEBTEDNESS			
FUND	STAMPON (THOUSANDS)	PRICE (pence)	YIELD (percent) (pence)
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	185
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	180
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	134 ¹ / ₂
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	145
British	12	10.000	173 ¹ / ₂
British	13 ¹ / ₂	10.000	210
British	12	10.000	194
British	12 ¹ / ₂	1.000	199

CRITICAL			
FUND	STAMPON (THOUSANDS)	PRICE (pence)	YIELD (percent) (pence)
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	185
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	180
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	134 ¹ / ₂
British	11 ¹ / ₂	10.000	145
British	12	10.000	173 ¹ / ₂
British	13 ¹ / ₂	10.000	210
British	12	10.000	194
British	12 ¹ / ₂	1.000	199

CRITICAL ILLNESS COVER

Monthly premiums for £50,000 sum assured for 25 years

Company	Value	Company	Value	Company	Value
AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00
AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00
AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00
AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00	AAA 30	12.00

Source: Greenwicks Na/West

Source: Term Direct

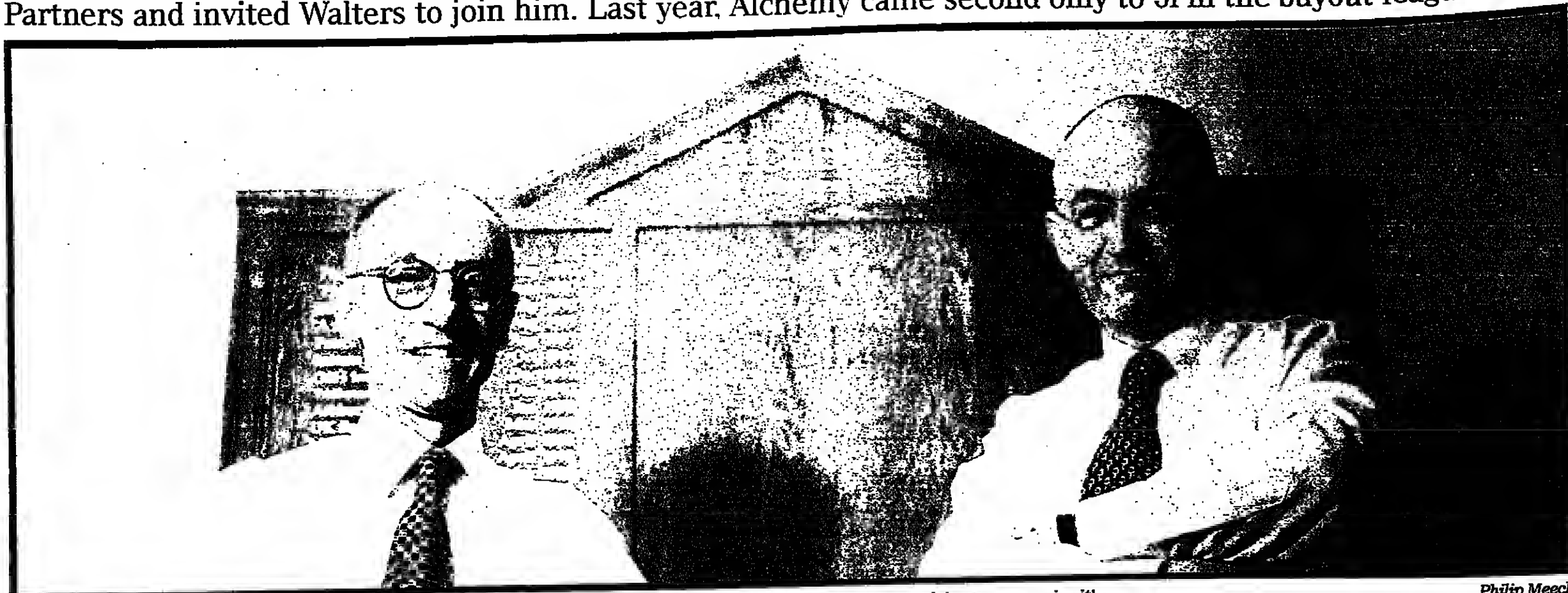
CORPORATE BONDS

Company	
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ME AND MY PARTNER

ERIC WALTERS AND JON MOULTON

Jon Moulton hired Eric Walters at Schroder Ventures in 1987. Ten years later, he founded private equity firm Alchemy Partners and invited Walters to join him. Last year, Alchemy came second only to 3i in the buyout league tables



Eric Walters (left) and Jon Moulton of Alchemy: 'We have got to a stage where we don't have a great deal to prove - we work because we enjoy it'

Philip Meech

JON MOULTON: The first contact I had with Eric was through Allen Sheppard, chief executive of Grand Metropolitan. GM wanted Eric to be part of the management in the States, and Eric didn't want to go. I heard he would make a good hire, and he joined me at Schroder Ventures, which I was running. I had set it up in spring 1985 after working for Citycorp in New York. I was advising in leveraged buyouts in 1980, and came back a year later.

Eric joined Schroder with the intention of being on the industrial and commercial side of the business. He was one of two people looking after things and sorting problems, rather than deal execution. To some extent, he has remained in that mode. He is loved by managers, sometimes to excess. It's very difficult to imagine Eric as a duplicitous conspirator. He expects me to look after the investors.

With Eric what you see is what you get: you know exactly where you are with him. He's bright and extremely decisive and he gets 90 per cent of decisions right. He's very organised, very tidy: his office desk is clean and he doesn't leave a meeting with open issues. His personal life is the same way. He's married to a Swiss lady, and that seems appropriate.

Schroder wanted their ball back in 1993. They'd given too much independence to the

size. We haven't got much more in the way of objectives: we have no firm strategic steps in mind. I'm 48 and he is 54: we have got to a stage where we don't have a great deal to prove. We work because we enjoy it.

If Eric and I have a disagreement, it can last as long as 15 seconds. The great thing is that he doesn't dig his heels in. He says, yes, I'm wrong - and that's it. It's gone.

We do have one terrible defect - we like to go to bed early. So when we go to the theatre, we go to matinees, because we both need to sleep.

ERIC WALTERS: I was working for Grand Metropolitan and Allen Sheppard started talking about how he enjoyed working with Jon Moulton. I had never met him. I didn't want to go to America for family reasons. I got a pay-off, and a smart headhunter rang me and put me in the direction of Schroder Ventures. I found Jon incisive and decisive, a kindred spirit.

He would never settle in a place such as Schroder. There was a spat, and that particular spat had its human dramas, but there was never any drama between me and Jon. If he had founded Alchemy at that point, I would have joined him, and I told him that. He chose to join Apex. He underplayed himself. He thought if he set up on his own, it would take a long time to see money from institutions. He was wrong: he didn't understand his own worth. He just couldn't believe it could be done so quickly.

I stayed with Schroder Ventures but I was bored out of my brain because of the absence of Jon and the scale of it. It's a big operation. There were lots of meetings and committees. Jon said to me: "Stop fooling round. Come and join me." He had just started Alchemy. My daughter said: "You love working with Jon and you always talk about him. Why don't you go and join him?" I thought: "You're right."

Venture capital, to me, is like some sort of heaven. I go home most days and say: "Guess what happened to me?" It's a complete buzz non-stop. Being at Alchemy is like the early days at Schroder Ventures, and people say to me: "You're reinvigorated." It's a combination of working with Jon and the small scale in terms of bodies. It's to do with the hunter-gatherer syndrome, being in groups of 5 to 15. We genuinely don't have clogged arteries.

We focus on difficult deals. That's easy to say and a lot of people talk about it, but you can't just wake up one morning and say: "We'll do loss-making transactions." For us, it's pretty cool. It's not by chance. We have a tremendous mix of different backgrounds, and that's vital. I've learnt a tremendous amount and I'm still learning. I'm Steady Eddy: I react evenly. I'm not casual, but I take everything calmly. Jon is more mercurial. It's a good combination, but our views tend to come into line.

Jon was really focused in creating something, but he has loosened up and he'll take a long weekend in France, and go skiing. I am not a financial guy - I learnt on the job - but working with Jon has opened a window on a world I had never dreamt of.

INTERVIEWS BY
RACHELLE THACKRAY



Encourage letters of complaint and you'll hang on to 10% more of your customers.

Shocking, isn't it? But it actually makes very good business sense. The fact is we all like a good moan now and again. And customers are no exception. Unfortunately they tend to be a little reticent, so before you realise there's a problem they've walked away. The solution can be as simple as a

follow-up letter after a deal is completed or a sale is closed. It never hurts to know what they're thinking. Because in business the last thing you need is surprises. To find out how Royal Mail can transform complaints into business advice, visit us at www.royalmail.co.uk. **DO WHAT WORKS.**

CUSTOMER
FEEDBACK



WEDNESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • PLUS THE INFORMATION DAILY

'The silly sentiment that makes television viewers feel that they knew Jill Dando is not so different from the corrupted obsession that ended in blame and hate and murder'

Death by television



BY DEBORAH ORR

I heard the news that Jill Dando had been a victim of violent crime on the lunchtime bulletin from *Newsroom Southeast*. There were a couple of brief sentences, saying that she had been stabbed outside her home in west London, and taken to hospital in an ambulance. My initial assumption was that this must have been a mugging, or perhaps what has come to be known as a care-in-the-community incident. Certainly, it must have been "a random act of senseless violence", not a common occurrence but not so rare that the phrase doesn't trip off the tongue. At this stage it was fervently to be hoped that this unlucky woman would make a full recovery.

But at the end of the programme, a newflash came up, and Jennie Bond announced that Dando, the "ordinary but extraordinary" girl-next-door, was dead. Then, with the kind of ironic flourish that is a consequence of the weird fact-meets-fiction hyperworld of daytime television, *Neighbours* came on.

I went out to meet a friend who freelances for the *Daily Mail*. On the car radio as I made the journey, Jack Straw was making a statement to the House of Commons regretting the loss of Jill Dando. Tony Blair had already issued a statement. This also seemed strange for, although this death was a tragedy, it was not connected with the affairs of government. Anyway, the fact that this same Tony Blair had been arguing for days that the Jill Dandos of Serbia were legitimate targets in bombing attacks was a little jarring.

By the time I'd met my friend from the *Mail*, she'd already made the *Crimestwatch* connection. We both felt sure that the murderer had been either a celebrity stalker or some other kind of loony who had been imprisoned due to the programme. Not random violence, then, but planned violence. Worse, more sin-

ister, sicker. When I got home I learned that she may not have been stabbed, she may instead have been shot. By this time flags were at half mast, tributes were pouring in - not least one from the Queen - books of condolence had been opened, and flowers were piling up. And by this time as well, the first of many comparisons was being made with the death of Princess Diana, or with the murder of John Lennon. Tributes were arriving at the BBC website at the rate of one every two seconds.

A picture of a screen was flashed up on another screen, displaying the first of the messages. At the top was one from a woman who said she thought she had been desensitised to violence - until now. This seemed to me like a tribute no one would like to receive. Is the fact that this tribute has come from someone who has remained unmoved by war in Europe, nail bombs on ethnic communities in Britain, young lives blasted away in distant schoolrooms, supposed to enhance its value? Or does the fact that the murder of a television presenter is found to be more moving than any other death, instead demean us all?

And another picture was emerging on our television screens, a picture that was new to me. I didn't watch *Holiday*, or *Crimestwatch*, or *Songs of Praise*. I hadn't seen the first episode of *Antiques Inspectors*. I don't read *OK!* or *Hell!* or *Radio Times*. I'd never read an interview with Dando or an item of celebrity gossip about her. I'd never felt her warmth ooze into my living room, or made a personal connection with her through the machine in the corner. All of the details about her life and work that were flooding into my head were new.

The man for whom Jill Dando really was the girl-next-door had been on television, explaining how he had found her, unconscious and covered in blood, on their shared doorstep. Her brother, Nigel Dando, also a journalist, came on to say how shattered he was by her loss. Many other newscasters and television presenters, who were her friends as well as

her colleagues, appeared on television to speak about their own sense of loss.

And they were united in all that they said. Jill Dando had been open, friendly, compassionate, professional, modest, without snobbery, caring, loving, close to her family, a good friend, a good colleague, a good neighbour. She had been beautiful, unaffected, intelligent, warm, thoughtful, sensitive, happy, positive, optimistic, charming, unassuming.

She had been preparing for her marriage, looking forward to starting a family. She had been a committed Christian, an enthusiastic and diligent charity worker, a loving daughter and sister. She had felt herself to live life on borrowed time for, as a child, she had had a hole in the heart operation. She had been slated as one of the presenters of the BBC's millennium coverage, while her first job, as a reporter on the *Weston Mercury*, had been secured after she wrote a 500-word essay on the year 2000. Of course, she has not lived to usher it in.

All of this makes her murder seem all the more poignant, even though we know that anyone's murder, whatever their flaws, is equally terrible. And while few people could have watched all of the tributes on television without weeping, my own tears made me feel ashamed.

What could these sentimental tears mean, in comparison to those of Jill Dando's fiancé, Mr Alan Farthing? He has lost his love, his future, the children he may have had. He has lost her real presence in his life. Her physical warmth, palpable beside him until yesterday, no longer exists.

How do my tears match up to those of Mr Jack Dando, her father, who held her in his arms as a baby, who brought her up so well, who has lost his wife and now has lost his child? How will he live without her? Is our loss at all comparable to his loss?

How can all these people who feel that they knew Jill Dando know her like her brother does, miss her like he does? How many times, as his life goes on without her, will he regret that there are joys

and sadnesses he can no longer share with her?

And anyway, is the grief of fathers, brothers, fiancées, friends greater because the loved one they have lost is "a woman who had everything"? For there is something disquieting in this too, as there was in the public reaction to the death of Princess Diana. Are nice, decent people this rare, that it is a national, not a personal tragedy, when one is lost?

Why do we feel the need to display our sadness so openly, with such presumption? We should all know that our own feelings of sadness are of a different, lesser order to those of the people who really did know her. We do not "know how they feel". We only imagine that we do. To claim a personal sense of loss, when we do not know this person at all, is surely self-indulgent.

Both the BBC and ITV broadcast tribute programmes after their early-evening news programmes, as much because this was the loss of someone many of them had known personally as because of the inherent news value of what, at this time, remained the kind of death that could befall any one of us.

But it was during the ITN tribute, led by Trevor McDonald, that the results of the post-mortem became public knowledge. Jill Dando had been shot in the head. Immediately, one's thoughts turned to the idea of a hitman, a contract killer. The prospect that Jill Dando's life was taken in exchange for money, as a consequence of her television appearances, is truly revolting. The police remain non-committal about connections to *Crimestwatch*, but have said that because of that connection they look on the investigation of Jill Dando's murder as "one of their own".

This, again, I find to be very far from a fitting tribute. Late last night, there were news pictures broadcast of Jill Dando's Fulham home, cordoned off by the police with a shroud of white tarpaulin. News reports assured us that they were searching every inch of the crime scene for forensic evidence.

This reminded me of the death of another person who was said to be a decent, loving human being with a bright future ahead of him. But when Stephen Lawrence lay dying, no police officer even checked to see if the pool of blood he was lying in was coming from him. There was no tarpaulin shroud for him. The wife of an off-duty police officer cradled Stephen Lawrence in her arms while they waited for an ambulance, and whispered to him "you are loved, you are loved".

This wise, compassionate woman spoke the truth more accurately than she could have known. It is because Stephen Lawrence was loved so much that we have heard of him at all. But we have heard of Jill Dando because she had a successful career in television. And while we may now feel like yelling that we loved her, that doesn't make it true.

Whether it was a stalker who killed Jill Dando, or a contract killer, the likelihood is that she died as a direct consequence of her fame. The silly sentiment that makes television viewers feel that they knew her is not so different from the corrupted obsession that ended in blame and hate and murder.

The power we invest in celebrity, the significance we imbue it with, and the uniqueness we project on to those in the public eye, is dangerous in itself. We feel we have a right to make these investments, and talk quite casually about the price of fame. When we talk of this, we are often referring to the negative impact that fame often has on celebrities - the drink, the drugs, the neuroticism, the monstrous egotism, the lack of privacy, the failure of relationships and so on. We talk of these "prices" as if we have the right to charge them, as if they are assumed to be worth paying. Jill Dando was not paying any of these prices. She was normal, well-adjusted, happy. And instead the price of her fame has been the ultimate one. Surely, in our celebrity-obsessed, intrusive, prurient culture, there is something to be learned from this.

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AMBITIONS?

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Justice for all

Sir: I must take issue with Anthony Scrivener QC (Comment, 26 April) on his sideswipe at High Court judges going out on circuit. Somewhat irrationally, he delivers it on the basis that litigants should not have to travel a long way to have their cases (or some aspect of them) heard before a High Court judge. He complains bitterly at barristers and others having to travel to Bristol from London to have a case heard there when it had no connection with Bristol, except that it was where the judge happened to be sitting.

Until the recent transfer of some judicial review sittings to the Northern Circuit from London, I felt much the same way at having to explain to clients why a wholly North-Western judicial review case could only be heard in London, whereas (for example) a professional negligence action or major criminal case could be heard close to home by a High Court judge sitting on circuit, even though the same judge could hear the judicial review case when sitting in London.

Litigants outside London should be able to get convenient justice in their regions equivalent to that available in London to Londoners. High Court judges sitting on this circuit now hear almost the whole range of work from the Queen's Bench, Family and Chancery Divisions.

High Court judges represent the highest quality pool of judicial expertise available nationally. That whole pool should be available to litigants nationally and not just in the capital.

Mr Scrivener's complaint at having to be dragged to Bristol should be directed at the judge in question, not to the circuit system. ANDREW GILBERT QC
Manchester

Nato's world role?

Sir: Andrew Marshall ("EU defence force moves step closer", 26 April) states that Nato's new Strategic Concept "is not quite the commitment to a global Nato role in the US had wanted", since it is limited to an ill-defined "Euro-Atlantic area".

However, Chapter 24 of that same Strategic Concept uses language which makes this geographical limitation look somewhat less certain. It states: "However, Alliance security must also take account of the global context. Alliance security interests can be affected by other risks of a wider nature, including acts of terrorism, sabotage and organised crime, and by the disruption of the flow of vital resources.... Arrangements exist within the Alliance for consultation among the Allies under Article 4 of the Washington Treaty and, where appropriate, co-ordination of their efforts including their responses to risks of this kind."

Does this mean that Nato will in fact be able to conduct out-of-area operations in the future? TOM McDONALD
British American Security Information Council
London SE1

Names for genocide

Sir: Alex Callinicos (letter, 23 April) states that the comparison between Hitler and Milosevic, made by Ken Livingstone and others, is "unsustainable and that the word 'genocide' has been wrongly used to describe the actions of Milosevic in Kosovo. He also claims we have a duty to make moral distinctions.

So let us not call these actions genocide. Let us call them what they are: mass murder, rape, theft, destruction of property and the eviction of tens of thousands of citizens from their homes on the basis of their ethnic origins. Having got the terms right, it now becomes clearer that Nato's attempts to rectify this are totally wrong and that Milosevic is not in any sense to be compared to Hitler but is just a single-minded ruler doing a necessary job that unfortunately involves committing

"atrocities" that are "undeniably wicked and barbarous" (Professor Callinicos's words).

But as these atrocities fall short of genocide, Nato's war is "futile and foolish". If they could be classed as genocide, Nato's war presumably would be sensible and just. It is not Ken Livingstone's logic that has been exposed by Professor Callinicos's letter, but his own.

Jewish survivors of the Holocaust must be viewing the events unfolding in Kosovo with horror and many will be appalled at the attempts of academics such as Professor Callinicos to invoke the uniqueness of their terror as a means of somehow downgrading the plight of the Kosovar Albanians into a less extreme form of human suffering, thereby questioning the morality of their would-be liberators and giving succour to the perpetrator of the atrocities.

There may well be a moral distinction between the two acts of barbarism, as Professor Callinicos claims. There are times, however, when we should be more aware of moral similarities. STUART RUSSELL
Cirencester, Gloucestershire

Sir: First we bomb a railway bridge, so cutting the main European international rail connection between Greece and Central Europe, when we could just have bombed the branch line going off from there into Kosovo. Then the bombing of Danube bridges cut that international waterway.

Now there has been extensive bombing of rail installations at Nis, which have presumably cut the European international rail route from Central Europe to Bulgaria and Turkey. Downstream of Yugoslavia the next rail crossing of the Danube is not until level with Bucharest, making a distinctly longer route from Central Europe to Turkey and an extremely long way round to western Bulgaria and Greece, even if the railways

thereabouts have the capacity to cope with extra traffic.

Not being a military man, I pass no judgement on the rights and wrongs of bombing things purely Serbian towards a just cause, but I do take exception to the destruction of pan-European transport infrastructure, which will take a long time to rebuild.

Why can't we at least consider and negotiate on the Russian peace offer? H. TREVOR JONES
Guildford, Surrey

Sir: Those with principled objections to the Kosovo war have no party to vote for in the coming local and other elections. They are all equally in favour of this conflict. I suggest that everyone who is against the war spoil his or her ballot paper by writing "peace" across it and placing a cross next to the word. Not only will that be a measure of public opinion, but if Labour is deprived of a majority in the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and some local authorities, it will be both justified

Sir: Unlike Sandy Walkington (letter, 26 April), I do not find it self-evident that St Alban has the best claim to be patron saint of England. The case for St John of Beverley is stronger. His care for the poor and handicapped; his ordination of our first historian, Bede; and the fact that Henry V ascribed the victory of Agincourt on the feast of the translation of St John to his intercession means that he would appeal to the compassionate, the educated, and the patriotic. And a holiday on 25 October would be welcome too! ERIC THOMPSON
London NW2

Sir: You report (27 April) that the Bradford & Bingley's bowler hat was ousted because

and welcome, given that it is the Labour government which has led us into this disaster. DAVID MASON
Newcastle upon Tyne

Sir: Isn't it odd that while the Church Commissioners, as the Church of England's financial leaders, rule out investment in British Aerospace on ethical grounds (letter, 24 April), the Archbishop of Canterbury, as its spiritual leader, says that the bombing of Yugoslavia "no doubt aided by weaponry designed and manufactured by that same company" is morally justified? RICHARD RAYFIELD
Corbridge, Northumberland

Right to be gay

Sir: Michael Bell (letter, 24 April) may not be right that the electorate are two-thirds against lowering the homosexual age of consent. One reputable opinion poll, conducted by NOP, showed the electorate supporting this measure by 60 per cent to 40 per cent.

However, rather than argue about where the majority is, I will

argue that human rights issues should not be settled simply by invoking the majority principle. It is those to whom the majority does wish to deny human rights, not those to whom it does not, whose human rights stand in need of protection.

If Mr Bell wishes to deny that an equal age of consent is a human rights issue, he should remember that the point is at present before the European Court of Human Rights. The preliminary opinion of the court's commission is that it is a human rights issue, and that if we do not pass the Bill, we are in breach of articles 8 and 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Is this something Mr Bell thinks majority support can justify? EARL RUSSELL
House of Lords

Sir: Michael Bell does not seem to see that equal rights are not a possession of the public or the House of Lords to confer or withhold, but are part of natural justice itself.

The first votes for women were reluctantly accorded only to the

over 30s, against all sort of specious claims that young women matured later than men or would be politically irresponsible.

Now we hear the same sort of wild generalisations - that a consenting 16- to 18-year-old man is less competent and more vulnerable in a same-sex sexual relationship than any woman of the same age. This, too, is blatant bigotry and sexism.

The issue is not what people may do with their maturing political or sexual drives. They may vote for governments which I do not like or choose erotic technique which might repel me. But if they do not threaten my own freedom I have no right to control or threaten theirs. EDWARD TURNBULL
Gosforth, Northumberland

Libraries in decline

Sir: Dr Eamonn Butler of the Adam Smith Institute rightly draws attention to the decline in the standard of the services offered by most public libraries (letter, 23 April). He speaks of libraries as "part of the leisure industry". Here is the cause of part of the problem.

Once, libraries were always a separate department of local government, with the Chief Librarian enjoying the status of a chief officer. With reorganisations of local government, libraries are now lumped together in unsuitable groupings, usually part of a leisure department. What do libraries have in common with parks, swimming baths, leisure centres, and, in some instances, cemeteries? If libraries can no longer stand alone in the local government hierarchy, a link with education would be more appropriate.

While libraries are statistically, and librarians prefer to spend money on 10 copies of a paperback edition of a romantic novel rather than on one copy of a serious biography, standards will continue to fall. MICHAEL WALPOLE
Birmingham

No flowers

Sir: I suppose that it is too late to ask people not to waste their money on flowers for Jill Dando and to give it to charity instead? Flowers do not last and are not cheap. The amount of money spent could do so much more if it was given to charity instead of to florists.

There seems to be a contest to see who or what garners most floral support after tragedy - Hillsborough, Dunblane, Diana. Let's break this cycle of waste and start a new culture of charitable giving "in the name of..."

The press could help by announcing the charities Jill supported. PAUL SMITH
Caterham, Surrey

Perils on the Net

Sir: It is probable that a number of factors led to the tragic events in Columbine High School, in the USA, but the availability of information - by whatever medium - is unlikely to be the prime cause. It is important that this is remembered as the United States and the world ask themselves how an incident as shocking as this can have occurred.

The majority of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the UK already "regulate" content, and will remove articles or entire websites, following notification by the police or the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). However, the nature of the Internet makes it impossible to prevent such material being placed online initially, and there are no globally agreed standards by which ISPs act.

"Filtering" software can go some way towards preventing access to "undesirable" material, but it is at best a blunt sword, blocking some sites erroneously, failing to block others, and subject to the moral philosophy of the software producers and their agents.

I suggest that the best approach is a combination of the content rating system being proposed by the IWF (which allows parents and guardians to make their own judgements), and co-operation between agencies to apprehend individuals who publish illegal material, regardless of whether it appears on the Net. ALAN STEVENS
Editor, "Which? Online"
The Consumers Association
London NW1

Sir: As well as lax American gun laws and violent pop culture, a third factor needs to be considered in the Denver and other school shootings, and should in principle be more easily controllable. This is the large size of schools.

Criminological research in the US has consistently shown a close correlation between violence and vandalism by pupils (both inside and outside school) and the number of pupils in a school. No similar research has been done in Britain, but there is little doubt that it would show the same result.

School building programmes in both countries over the past 40 years therefore constitute one of several ways in which government spending has been the problem, not the solution. F. KNOX
London SW4

As she is spoke

Sir: Never mind mispronunciation (letters, 24, 26, 27 April). When will people who should know better stop saying "bought" instead of "brought"? I dare say the current debate will soon reach a crescendo. KEITH BARTLETT
Fishguard, Pembrokeshire

Sir: After filling us children with the delights of the Romantic poets and the sonnets of Shakespeare, our beloved Miss Connors would turn to her class and finish with: "Of course, you know that the best English is spoken here in Dublin. We know how to pronounce our R's." GERALDINE BURKE
Marsh Baldon, Oxfordshire

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



City Allotments No 3: A BT telephone kiosk contributes to the construction of a greenhouse at Witton & District allotments in Birmingham. Andrew Fox

Breaking, entering and checking out the wall colour

A MOST extraordinary trial is going on at the moment at the High Court, in which a married couple is accused of the crime of breaking and entering a neighbourhood house. The extraordinary aspect of the trial is their defence plea, which is that they merely wished to have a look round. But perhaps a brief extract from yesterday's proceedings will give a better idea of a case which promises to make legal history.

Counsel: You are Mr and Mrs Whittle?

Whittle: No, I am Mr Whittle.

Counsel: But when you are with your wife you are Mr and Mrs Whittle?

Whittle: No, I am still Mr Whittle when I am together with my wife.

Counsel: I see. Are you often together?

Whittle: We have been together now for 17 years.

Counsel: So, you've been married for 17 years?

Whittle: No, we've been married for 19 years.

Counsel: How is it possible that you have been married for more years than you have been together?

Whittle: I had to go abroad on business for two years from 1987 to 1989.

During that time we could hardly have been said to be together.

Counsel: I see. What sort of business took you abroad?

Whittle: I had to go on a weekend sales trip to the Lebanon.

Counsel: And that took two years?

Whittle: Yes. During my weekend in Beirut I was captured and held as a hostage for two years by a militant Palestinian organisation.

Counsel: I am sorry to hear that.

Whittle: Not as sorry as I was, or indeed my wife was.

Judge: Mr Whittle, I fail to see the point of this line of questioning. If Mr and Mrs Whittle are up on a charge of breaking and entering, why are you delving into his commercial history?

Counsel: The idea is to confuse him with apparently random questions, my Lord, until when he is off guard, I can swoop and disconcert him with strategically placed queries, like a picador weakening a bull.

Judge: It's not working yet, is it?

Counsel: No, my Lord.

Judge: I think you'll find that it's the banderillero who swoops in the bull-ring. The picador merely shuffles around on a condemned nag.

Counsel: You're right, my Lord.

Judge: Carry on, smarty pants.

Counsel: Now, Mr Whittle, on 17



MILES KINGTON

'My wife had seen a rather nice cream in the hall and thought we ought to have a look'

July last year, were you and your wife together?

Whittle: We were.

Counsel: You were not on some mysterious trip to the Middle East?

Whittle: No, we were at home in our small Hampshire village of Fenton Bressler.

Counsel: You were not at home all the time, I believe?

Whittle: No. We were also in the house of Sir Edgar and Lady Truelove, the Manor House, which is 500 yards from us.

Counsel: Had you been invited to go in there?

Whittle: No.

Counsel: So you had broken and entered the Manor House?

Whittle: No. We merely entered. No breaking was involved. The front door was open.

Counsel: What on earth possessed you to enter someone else's home without permission?

Whittle: Well, at that particular

time, we were planning to repaint the hall, sitting-room and staircase of our own home, and my wife and I could never agree on what colour paints we wanted. The problem was made worse by the fact that modern colour cards, however well printed, never give the real effect of what the paint will look like in real life. Ask any painter or decorator.

Counsel: I intend to.

Whittle: My wife happened to mention that she had seen a rather nice cream paint in the Trueloves' hall when she had been there for a WI meeting, and thought we ought to have a look at it. So the next time we were passing we took our courage in both hands and knocked on the door to ask the Trueloves if we could have a look. There was no answer. We tried looking through the window. The light was not good

enough. I tried the door handle. It turned and the door opened. Without quite realising what we were doing, we went in and had a look. We were still in the house when the Trueloves returned.

Counsel: But not in the hall, I think? You were found upstairs in the bedroom?

Whittle: Yes, well, that was because we didn't really like the colour in the hall. It was a bit on the yellow side, a bit drab. Quite apart from anything else, it reminded me uncannily of the wall colour of the room in which I was kept hostage for two years. So my wife said she thought there was a nicer shade of barley cream on the landing upstairs, and we just popped upstairs to have a look...

More of this fascinating case some other time, I hope.

THE INDEPENDENT

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A hopeful sign, but Nato should keep on bombing Serbia

THE ART of diplomacy is in the timing as much as the substance – and, for the first time in the Kosovo crisis, diplomacy's hour seems to be upon us. Two factors have been responsible for the sudden shift in climate. One was last week's Nato summit in Washington; the other was the unexpected voice of the Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister, Vuk Draskovic, suggesting that the hitherto monolithic facade of the Belgrade leadership is starting to crack.

Mr Draskovic has warned Serbs that they are alone, that Nato remains united, and that the destructive bombing will continue. For its part, the summit has shown that a Nato ground invasion, the surest guarantee of a speedy end to the war, is not on the cards, and that weeks, maybe months, of bombing will be needed if the Allies are to prevail. For both sides, in short, the last few days have been what the Americans call a "reality check", upon which the diplomats perhaps can build. And they are trying.

Yesterday Strobe Talbott, the US Deputy Secretary of State, was in Moscow talking to Viktor Chernomyrdin, Russia's special envoy in Kosovo and the most plausible mediator of any settlement. Mr Talbott is being followed by Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, the body that was sidelined before the conflict, but which performance will play a large part in implementing a solution to it. Later this week Mr Chernomyrdin is expected to visit Belgrade, for the second time in 10 days.

And all this is going on against a backdrop of political argument in Belgrade, with talk of serious grumbling among the generals, and rumours of mass mutiny in the ranks – factors that ought to nudge President Milosevic towards a climb-down. But let us not get carried away by wishful thinking.

Of course, a speedy diplomatic solution is fervently to be desired. But it must be the right diplomatic solution. Nato's original five demands for a settlement have, to some extent, been overtaken by events. For the Allies, there are now three non-negotiable conditions: the total withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo, the introduction of a peace-keeping force with a strong Nato component and, most important of all, the return of the refugees to their homes.

Outrage at the plight of the Kosovo Albanians was the reason why Nato embarked upon this ill-executed war. Anything less than their return to a secure Kosovo will amount to a Nato defeat. Alas, the West's understandable eagerness to mend fences with the Russians may be blinding it to the fact that these conditions are perhaps not quite the ones Mr Chernomyrdin is putting to Mr Milosevic – and that, in any case, there is no sign that the Yugoslav leader is listening.

Among the many lessons of this crisis is that to Slobodan Milosevic normal standards of reason do not



apply. Had he signed up to Rambouillet, or thrown in his hand after a few nights of bombing – as the Allies so confidently but erroneously believed he would – his voice would still have been heard, and Kosovo would have remained part of Serbia. Now, sooner or later, he will lose much if not all of the province. Perhaps partition will be the result. Maybe the bitter jest of moderate Serbs will be borne out, that their country will emerge from the war minus Kosovo but still saddled with Milosevic.

But these are speculations. For the moment the air war must go on. If four weeks of bombing are finally producing fissures in the regime, this is no moment to stop. For one thing, who knows where the Draskovic gambit will lead? And has Mr Milosevic ever kept a single promise in connection with Kosovo? There is no reason to believe he would long honour any undertaking given to secure a halt in the bombing. The diplomats are right to continue their labours. But we suspect it will be weeks yet before their hour truly comes.

A disturbing trend in our modern society

THE MURDER of Jill Dando is deeply shocking. The brutal killing of this talented broadcaster has understandably captured the country's horrified attention.

Already, similarities can be observed between our response to the tragic death of Ms Dando and that to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. The Queen and the Prime Minister have expressed their sadness; the BBC has made available a book for the public to write its condolences in; people have begun to lay floral bouquets and messages at the gates of the BBC and at Ms Dando's home.

It is nothing new for people to be upset by the death of a prominent person. In the 19th century, the death of General Gordon elicited widespread public mourning; more recently, thousands queued all night to pay their respects

to Sir Winston Churchill as he lay in state. One suspects, however, that Ms Dando would have been puzzled by the emotions she has sparked off. For she was neither hero nor statesman. Instead, she was a television presenter whose likeable and uncomplicated character appears to have found a resonance in her audience.

But what do the growing piles of flowers and the torrent of e-mails to the BBC tell us about our modern society? Certainly, it is good to see that the notoriously huttoned-up British are not ashamed to express their emotions freely. However, there is also something disturbing about this outpouring of grief. It suggests an emptiness in too many people's lives that is filled by those they do not really know. We should question the tendency of many Britons to divert the love that should be given to family and friends to people who appear on television and on the covers of magazines.

These outpourings do not honour the memory of the modest Ms Dando. At a time when the nation is embarked on war, they smack of recreational grief.

Amid the din of war, listen out for the politician who keeps silent

STOP A minute: pause amid the war talk and revelations of those hot internal divisions behind the cool New Labour facade. When politics is noisy it is worth listening out for those keeping the most eloquent silences.

The senior member of Government going about his business most smoothly and quietly these days is the Chancellor, Gordon Brown. His enemies may gloat that "Gordon hasn't had a war at all", meaning that he hasn't been on the television sounding statesmanlike. I see no sign that Gordon resents this. Chancellors do not warm to wars. They interfere with the accounting. Mr Brown's success in office has been the result of his ability to exploit relatively small room for manoeuvre and magnify the impact of the results by some nifty presentation.

So far he has studiously avoided acknowledging that there is a war on at all. Early on, he remarked that the contingency fund of some £1.2bn was covering the costs. But money gets spent a lot faster than this in a war – some £60m from Britain so far. So the Treasury made a brief statement last week announcing that an "audit of war" was under way to check the running costs of the enterprise. This was so discreetly announced, with Mr Brown at a safe distance in Scotland, that it went unnoticed.

But the subject will soon be unavoidable. An unintentionally ironic point is made on the implications of the conflict by Maurice Saatchi's and Peter Warburton's pamphlet calling on the Tories to kneecap Peter Lilley and all the other born-again Big Spenders and opt for lower tax rates instead:

"With the formation of a new government by the Liberals following the 1905 election came a change in the way taxation was viewed: from a means of supporting wars to a way of supporting the people."

Well, something has to give, to support the war effort, and raised taxes and/or heavy government borrowing are a distinct possibility. Some of those opposed to Britain fighting Slobodan Milosevic at all have been so carried away by their desire for the Government to fare ill that they are prophesying dire consequences for Mr Brown. On this view, his reputation as the Iron Chancellor will be determined when the bills come in.

Mr Brown looks to me like a Chancellor who has prepared himself for just such a development. His very discretion about the war and its costs is the first plank in his survival strategy. By making clear that he is not a frontline political figure in this conflict, he is also ensuring that the blame for any financially unpleasant domestic consequences does not rest on him. If it does cost us higher taxes, no one will fairly be able to blame him for raising them. That event will be seen, for better or worse, to have been the result of Mr Blair's wholehearted engagement in the Balkans.

The outcome of the war remains uncertain, as is its aftermath in British politics. Mr Blair has so far looked like a confident leader, out-hawking some rather tentative American hawks. But a more difficult hour may come. If the outcome in Kosovo is an unstable fudge, the last thing the Prime Minister wants – or deserves,



ANNE
MCELVOY

If the war does cost us higher taxes, no one will fairly be able to blame Mr Brown for raising them

given his own robust stance – is to end up having to pass off a failure as a success.

Mr Brown, meanwhile, has consigned himself to a bloodless but more certainly glorious battlefield – the Scottish elections, where the only question is the margin of New Labour's victory. This is not the way things looked early this year when the Government drew up its plans for the scrap with the SNP and concluded that Donald Dewar desperately needed the help of another big hitter with appeal to the Scottish electorate. As I understand it, the Chancellor saw this as something of an onerous duty for someone of his seniority. In his darker moments he may have muttered something about these English modernisers being all very well in their place, but the Labour Party still

needing its Scottish backbone when real challenges present themselves.

Yet the election has given Mr Brown the opportunity to pitch his tent firmly on the reassuring turf of Britishness, and to appear as an inclusive politician who incorporates both a distinctly Scottish and a United Kingdom identity.

He used his intellectual base, the John Smith Institute, to deliver a major speech on Britishness earlier this month. The association with the legacy of the late Labour leader, John Smith, is a sign that Mr Brown sees himself as the continuation of the moderate Labour tradition, as opposed to the conscious mould-breaking that Mr Blair embodies. It is a distinction that will doubtless be drawn again this summer when the fifth anniversary of Mr Smith's death is commemorated.

In Scotland, Mr Brown is free to indulge as much sentimentality about the memory of Mr Smith as he likes; it does no harm in the late Mr Smith's homeland, whereas the Blairites always feared that Mr Smith's old-fashioned aura and reluctant embrace of the middle classes were an electoral liability in the south of England. Never think that these old differences have ceased to matter. New Labour is shaped by the failures of the past, which means that it can never escape the memories.

None the less, Mr Brown mustered the magnanimity to ask his old feuding partner Peter Mandelson up to Glasgow to dispense some strategy advice for the final phase of the election campaign. In the laying bare of the 1997 rivalries at New Labour's

court, Mr Brown emerges in the most enviable position of all his senior colleagues. Take the now famous chapter in Don MacIntyre's biography in which Mr Mandelson leaves a planning meeting abruptly after a disagreement with the shadow Chancellor and offers his resignation as campaign manager. Mr Blair writes back, with half an eye on the political record, "We are not players in some Greek tragedy." Geoffrey Robinson, the kindly photocrat, seeks to calm down Mr Mandelson over lunch, with singularly little success. All is flurry, spin and high emotion. What does Mr Brown do? Very little. You gain the impression of a rather stolid creature in the middle of all the fuss, imperviously getting on with the election.

This is an intriguing change from the more frequently peddled picture of Mr Brown as a tortured soul, unable to recover from having had the mantle of Labour leadership snatched from him by Mr Blair. Indeed, once Mr Mandelson became a minister, the Chancellor allowed his Treasury court to pursue the old feud by proxy. Minions fought a dirty war on both sides and Mr Mandelson was the ultimate victim. Perhaps the cathartic force of this outcome has brought both of them to their senses; perhaps the Chancellor is simply finding it easier to be well-adjusted when Mr Mandelson is down on his luck. But a certain peacefulness has descended on the turbulent heart of New Labour. You might almost think that the boys had grown up at last. On past evidence, we can only wonder how long the sanity will last.

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
The Indian press anticipates India's third general election in three years

of well-defined and clearly spelt-out common agendas before seeking the mandate. *The Hindu*

IF ONLY our political leaders

and elected representatives had the nation's interest instead of their own in their minds, India's 13th Lok Sabha would have come only in 2006 AD. Sadly enough over the

past three years, three governments were brought down, not over any contentious national issues or on a matter of principle, but on personal whims and ambitions. *Hindustan Times*

THE MESSAGE people are likely to send out in these elections, as in the last two electoral exercises, is that they rely no more on the government of the day for roti, kapda and makaan, but it is their leadership that

they lament. The voter fears that whatever the hawa that blows, it will be the same hot air. *Times of India*

ONE HOPES that the 13th Lok Sabha will throw up a government that will have a stable majority and the resolution to rise above partisan pressures and act in these and other complex matters confronting it, in a manner that serves the national interest. *The Pioneer*

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Remember, they only name things after you when you're dead or really old."
Barbara Bush at the naming ceremony for the George Bush Centre for Intelligence

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Politicians are the same all over. They promise to build a bridge even where there's no river."
Nikita Khrushchev, Soviet statesman



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PANDORA

"I'M PRIVILEGED to have gone to the moon. People's perceptions change of you - but life is all about meeting real people," Buzz Aldrin told a space cadet at Sound Republic this week. Givency themed the bottle with Futuroma elements to hype its deal with the astronaut. Once he steered spaceships, now he sells scent. That's (millennial) life, kiddo.

MUST READ for the glossy posse this week is a pirate copy of *Versace Undressed*, an unauthorised biography of the murdered Italian couturier. Scheduled for publication in July, *Undressed* contains many lively and entertaining insights into the fashion industry.

SO IT'S a *Knockout* returns to the ring: may Pandora be the first to plead for a reprise for *Tiswas*?

IT'S A date. The numbers are in - and how - on what we should call the decade following the Nineties. Pandora's People overwhelmingly prefer "the Naughties" (and its variant spellings) - but the "Double Zeros", "Yukies" (that's a Y2K thing), "Nothings" and "Teensies" also win minority support. Precision points to Reading's Kate Tompkins for suggesting that the "Teensies" would only really apply from 2013 to 2019.

SEND MESSAGES: Let's clarify the buzz about the ad that ran in this newspaper's front section earlier this month. Everyone's talking about the crash hot lay-out and twisted type; but eagle-eyed readers rapidly sussed that the stunt highlighted the plight of MS sufferers. Saatchi & Saatchi's Greg Martin and Mike McKenna had 60 minutes to produce the ad from *The Independent's* raw copy as it went to press. Legible versions of the stories appeared on the page after the ad: a strip at the bottom of the page explained: "MS scrambles messages between the brain and the body." Top marks to *Creative Review*, the first trade book to spot the decade.

DANI BEHR (pictured) - who numbers Christian Slater, Les Ferdinand and George Clooney among the beaus on her string - is back before the camera. "I was an actor before I was a presenter," Behr insisted at the premiere party for David Cronenberg's *Existenz* the other night. "As far as I'm concerned, I'm returning to my first love."

The former presenter of *The Word*, a dumb and dusted youth TV show, plays the receptionist role in the thriller *Rancid Aluminium*. But South African-born

Dani found location work with Sadie Frost and Tara Fitzgerald a chore.

"After filming for a couple of weeks in Wales, I was hungry for the creature comforts of home."

Just as well former fancy Ryan Giggs never took her back to meet his folks, isn't it, although Pandora always rated Behr as one of Giggs's top scores.

PADDY ASHDOWN'S Yeovil constituency is up for grabs. Perhaps the selection committee will consider the life-long Liberal Nicholas Parsons. Parsons turned down the chance to become the candidate in 1976. Would it be hesitation, repetition or deviation for him to have another pop?

OH, AND have you noticed more people in the street apparently talking to themselves? Reality is that they're using the new hands-free gizmo that allows mobile phone users to hump their gums without frying their brains. Sure, it's a civilisation advance; but feisty types are bending Pandora's ear to bitch about these mumbblers suddenly stopping in their tracks and creating pedestrian pile-ups. Since the walkie-talkies aren't worried about looking like zombies, perhaps they wouldn't mind wearing a revolving light on top of their noggin to warn others that they're in chat mode. Unless anyone else has a better idea...

Contact Pandora by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk



Vin rouge for la vie en rose



SUE ARNOLD

Presumably it was on medical grounds that our supermarket quadrupled the size of its wine shelves

IT COMES as no surprise to learn that, according to the latest medical report (by the National Heart Forum), we as a nation are dying less of chronic heart disease than we did 10 years ago. What does surprise me is that nowhere in the report is the magic word *garlic* mentioned. Much is made of the fact that we're drinking more red wine and that red wine, especially the Cabernet Sauvignon variety, contains a natural anti-cholesterol ingredient which burns up excess fat.

Presumably it was on medical grounds that the supermarket across the road changed its layout recently and quadrupled the size of its wine department, and particularly its stock of half bottles of red wine, so much more convenient for frail little old ladies (like me) to slip into their baskets along with a tin of sardines and a nice apple turnover. I'm perfectly happy to go along with the red wine theory. Writing in a medical journal called *Heart* some time ago, a French doctor came up with the following statistics. In Toulouse, 75 out of 100,000 people die from heart disease. In Belfast, 348

out of 100,000 die from coronary-related diseases and, in Glasgow, it's even higher, 380. *Alors*, concluded M le Medecin, if the natives of Glasgow and Belfast drank as much red wine as the good burghers of Toulouse, instead of all that filthy stout and Scotch, their hearts would be in better nick.

Maybe so, but you could say the same about garlic, which may not

have been the subject of the survey but was almost certainly consumed in the same proportions, per capita, as red wine in Toulouse, Belfast and Glasgow. I have long subscribed to the view that garlic is a cure-all for most diseases, especially the coronary kind, an opinion shared by many of my French, Italian and Polish friends. "Oh, you mean Continentals," my late auntie Winnie would have said, pursing her lips as if she'd bitten on a lemon. Continentals basically meant anyone who wasn't born in Pinner. Well, maybe they are but they're also incredibly healthy.

My friend Woytek, a Pole, whose family has a history of heart disease, chews whole cloves of raw garlic as others chew gum. At 60 he can ski like a teenager. When he was a child his mother, he told me, used to stuff the toes of his boots with garlic to stop him catching cold as he walked to school.

My French friend Annalise puts garlic in everything, including her Christmas cake, and feeds garlic capsules to her dog to cure its breathlessness. It's a very old, very

smelly, very bad-tempered dog and the sooner it is relieved of its breath, most of her friends and family agree, the better. But Annalise is soft-hearted.

It seems that the supermarket across the road has been taking advice from Continentals because it now sells not one, but four varieties of garlic. As well as drinking more red wine, we also appear to be eating more garlic, which is probably why we're not falling off our perch as much as we were from heart attacks. We used to be so priggish about garlic. "Ugh, you smell like a Spanish waiter," my fastidious room-mate would say to her boyfriend. Ten years later she took her kids on holiday to Fuengirola and ran off with one. Garlic is a funny thing. If you chew it raw, like Woytek, it smells perfectly pleasant. If you cook it for hours it doesn't smell at all. It's only if you fry it for 10 minutes that the aroma seems to linger behind your teeth for days.

It was my Italian friend Lucia who taught me to roast whole cloves of garlic in their skins, sprinkled with olive oil, and then squeeze them like

toothpaste on to toast as a cure for heartburn. Or hiccups. Or just because they're delicious. I saw her yesterday and we talked about the heart report. "Darleceeng," said Lucia. "Garlic is good for the heart, of course, but irrigation is better."

She had just come back from two weeks in a Portuguese detox clinic where she had eaten no garlic, no food at all in fact, just organic fruit juice and Thylim Husk three times a day. She was now totally cleansed - her blood, her skin, her heart.

Thylim Husk, apparently, is a natural fibre which can absorb 50 times its own weight in toxins. What was the point of the Thylim Husk? I said. Lucia said it helped wash out toxins that had been festering in your intestines for years, poisoning your system, clogging your blood. For the first time in her life, she said, she felt pure. Did she look pure? Well, I said, hedging, "Darleceeng, if you could only see what they found in my intestines. There were traces of mother's milk. Imagine, 35-year-old milk." I'd rather not. Come on, let's chew some garlic, it's easier, I said.

Why should we let Fascists have freedom of speech?



KEN LIVINGSTONE

I ignore death threats unless Special Branch warns that I am under far-right surveillance

THE DAY before the Brixton bomb I had a letter from the "White Wolves" identical with that received by Oona King and other parliamentary colleagues, but, given the number of death threats I have had, it just went into the bin. Yesterday, however, I received a letter claiming to be from Combat 18 which had been posted the day before the Brick Lane bomb, saying there would be another nail bomb attack next day in an "alien" area. It listed Southall, Golders Green, Kilburn, Pettit Lane and Brent as potential areas.

I passed it on to the police. They are now examining it for any evidence they may be able to extract, although, of course, it could just be another sick hoax.

Over the years, I have been attacked by racists on several occasions. Most of these incidents took place in the early Eighties at the height of press hysteria about the Greater London Council. I clearly remember my first warning from Special Branch officers, who arrived at County Hall to tell me the disturbing news that my movements were being monitored by an extremist group. However, because I lived in a bedsit and travelled by public transport there was, apparently, little they could do to protect me. An attack eventually did take place, taking the form of my being sprayed with red paint by two members of the National Front masquerading as "Friends of Ulster".

Through long experience, I have tended to ignore death threats unless accompanied by a warning from Special Branch that I am once again under surveillance from the far right.

As I am still alive I suppose the police have been justified in not providing the appropriate resources at these times. The best I ever got was when a psychiatric patient released under the care in the community programme was known to be trying

to buy a gun in order to kill me. My local police offered to walk me to and from the Tube each day, which was the best they could do given the cuts in police numbers during the final days of the Tory Home Secretary Michael Howard.

I have always viewed Combat 18, however, as an altogether more worrying organisation. They have sometimes recruited embittered former members of the military and therefore have been trained in the use of weapons and attack. A few years ago they totally trashed the Kilburn Book Shop for the crime of stocking Irish and left-wing literature. The whole operation, undertaken with military precision, took hardly any time. A car screeched to a halt on Kilburn High Road and four balaclava-clad thugs destroyed the inside of the shop and were away within five minutes, never to be apprehended.

Despite the lessons of the Lawrence Inquiry, which underlined the way that the police and other authorities tend to dismiss or play down racial motivation in violent crimes against black people, it was disheartening to see so many people

who should have known better rushing to deny that the Brixton bomb could have been a racial attack.

When Lee Jasper, the secretary of the National Black Alliance, said that black people in the area would regard this as an attack on them, his comments were largely ignored. His views were even attacked on the grounds that Brixton is a "multi-racial" area. But, compared with all the economic targets that could be attacked in London, Brixton's only attraction for a bomber is its status as a symbol of black Britain.

To their credit, the Metropolitan Police did consider the racial option, and even went so far as to release details of Combat 18's claim of responsibility, ghostly made from a phone box in Well Hall Road where Stephen Lawrence was murdered. This area of south-east London, which has housed the BNP headquarters, has become known as the racist murder capital of Britain following the brutal deaths of young black men - Stephen Lawrence, Rohit Duggal and Rolan Adams.

The fact that so many attacks and murders continue to take place against black and Asian people is a brutal reality only partly acknowledged in wider British society. The advances represented by the Lawrence Inquiry appear to be the motivation behind the bombings.

According to a leaked internal document of one of the terror groups linked to the bombings, the White Wolves, the main target was the black communities: "If this is done regularly, effectively and brutally, the aliens will respond by attacking the whites at random, forcing them off the fence and into self-defence."

This is a declaration of a race war with its clear aim being to roll back the recommendations of the Lawrence report, and it should be dealt with as such by the police and the Government.

In just a few weeks the Fascist



Oona King, MP for Tower Hamlets, in Brick Lane. P. Aitchison

British National Party will field candidates in the local and European elections, thus giving them free mail-shots to the electors, and possibly a party political broadcast. But the Lawrence Inquiry and these two nail-bombings raise a fundamental issue of democracy.

Whose civil liberties do we protect by allowing such people the right of access to such resources? Only those who stand to gain from the death and maiming that arise from their politics. Combat 18 and other such groups should be apprehended and the BNP should be banned from gaining the rights accorded to genuine political parties in the coming elections. We should ban the BNP which is no more than a racist criminal conspiracy.

There will be those who argue that freedom of speech must extend even to views as abhorrent as those of the BNP and Combat 18. Yet no one suggests that we should allow paedophiles freedom to advocate child abuse. How many young thugs will be encouraged by the next BNP political broadcast to go out on to the

streets and give a good kicking to the first black man they find?

British race relations have arrived at a crossroads. It is not now simply an issue of rounding up a few nutters, but of reshaping how our major institutions deal with racism and black representation. Jack Straw's commitment to extending the 1976 Race Relations Act to the police and other previously exempt institutions is a welcome first step.

In 1977 the National Front won 5 per cent of Londoners' votes at the GLC elections. In Hackney North I made the issue of the National Front candidate the major part of my election campaign. In contrast to other Labour candidates in the area who argued that we should ignore them totally, the result was that the NF vote in my seat was only half what they managed to achieve in the rest of the area. The lesson is clear: we can't ignore the Fascists in the hope that they will go away. We must take them on and defeat them using all the powers of the state and with the backing of local communities. And we must start now.

A new vision built on old foundations



PODIUM

From a speech by the Prince of Wales to the Making Heritage Industrial Buildings Work conference in Swindon

PERHAPS I ought briefly to explain why I have volunteered to come this morning. It is primarily because for the last 45 years I have watched in despair as one remarkable industrial building after another has been systematically demolished to make way for what some people like to describe as "comprehensive redevelopment".

But these buildings are just as much part of our national heritage as cathedrals, palaces or country houses. Many were built to the highest architectural standards of their day and, despite the passage of time, remain in remarkably good condition.

We hear a lot these days about "joined-up" government. Well, I think it is most certainly time to talk about "joined-up" regeneration strategies. Too many regeneration initiatives have been undermined by short-term considerations which have favoured low-cost, new-build schemes and produced lots of breeze-block and tin factories or business parks, even in the heart of our most famous Victorian cities.

They have not taken sufficient account of the opportu-

nities offered by heritage industrial buildings.

Policy-makers and developers too often make a presumption that "brown-field" sites mean "cleared and vacant sites". In reality, they frequently contain many reusable buildings that are often of striking architectural importance. They are a reusable resource and should be part of our drive to give practical expression to sustainability.

Given the fundamental shifts we have seen in our traditional economy, it is tempting for policy-makers to argue for the demolition of the old factories and communities. Then what? Are we to re-create the suburbs in the heart of our cities? Or perhaps whole cities are expected to move away to more prosperous areas in order to find work?

Surely a better way forward is to promote the process of re-inventing communities where people already live, and recognise the value of the investment both in people and the built environment that already exists, rather than abandon it.

After the last war, and right up to the Seventies, govern-

ments carried through an ambitious programme to build new towns. Millions were moved from congested cities to new and expanded towns with modern houses and workplaces. Lives were transformed for the better. But at a price. It took many years for communities to become established, and we have the phenomenon of "new town blues".

If we are to give meaning to any strategy of favouring

brown-field development, there has to be an explicit recognition that much of the built environment, and especially heritage industrial buildings, represents a sustainable resource from past generations which is capable of being "recycled" for new uses.

We are accustomed to thinking of cities such as Bath and Edinburgh as places with a great architectural heritage, but visitors to Manchester, Glasgow and Newcastle are now, at last, beginning to recognise the beauty and value of our heritage from the industrial age. It is significant that the resident population of the city core in Manchester has risen from 400 to 6,000 in eight years - almost all living in converted warehouses and mills. Where a choice exists in favour of living in an exciting urban community, people will make it.

Regeneration strategies in the new millennium will also be operating in new economic circumstances. The world has moved into a new economic order - the knowledge-based economy. We need to create new kinds of communities where this economy can flourish - places where people will

want to live and work, and will want simply to be.

I am not talking about the restoration of these buildings just because of their architecture, nor the creation of "Heritage Theme-Park Britain" where we repackage our heritage for the benefit of tourists. But there is no doubt that these buildings, and the environment in which they stand, can provide a uniquely attractive atmosphere for modern living and working. We need to rediscover the ingredients for such an atmosphere and try to emulate them in the future.

It was the great American urban historian, Lewis Mumford, who wrote that "If we would lay the foundation for a new urban life, we must first understand the historic nature of the city". As we wrestle with the regeneration of so many of our urban communities, finding successful new uses for remarkable old buildings is a very tangible way of retaining just such an understanding. When all is said and done, I believe we owe something to those craftsmen who built these buildings with such skill and pride.

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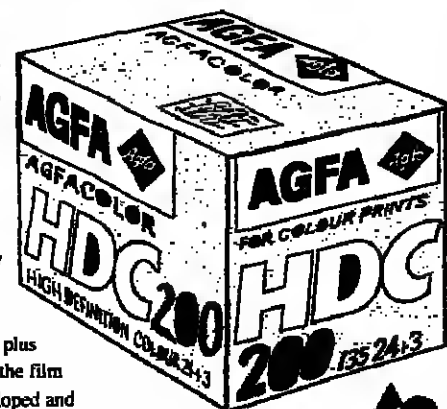
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Say goodbye to your local GP



JEREMY LAURANCE

While 24-hour shopping and TV are taken for granted, medical advice remains hard to obtain

WHEN DID you last see your doctor? I ask because it is entirely possible you do not know who he or she is. A recent government survey showed that one in four patients waits at least four days for an appointment with their GP but my own completely unscientific poll of friends and colleagues suggests this is a conservative estimate. The Radio 4 Today presenter James Naughtie recently complained he had had to wait two weeks, and delays of up to four weeks are not uncommon.

In these circumstances, it makes sense to opt for whoever can see you first. Most patients - with the important exception of the chronically ill, who make regular visits to the surgery - want rapid treatment and are less concerned about who provides it. But that means that the link with the personal family doctor is weakened.

In a society in which round-the-clock shopping, banking and TV are taken for granted, medical advice remains astonishingly hard to obtain. GPs' surgeries are open for a couple of hours morning and evening, and if you cannot get an early appointment the only alternative is to queue for a couple of hours in the walk-in surgery.

As the Prime Minister noted in a speech to GPs earlier this month, although most patients are happy with the care they get, they are less happy with how long they have to wait for it. That is about to change. The scale of the change that is planned has been heralded and little written about. Put simply it is to replace GPs with nurses as the first point of contact for patients. This change will fundamentally alter the way patients obtain medical treatment, by opening up a new gateway to the NHS. It could even spell the end of the traditional GP.

Major changes in social institutions are always difficult to date. But the winter crisis in the NHS last Christmas may have set the seal on a process whose origins can be traced back years or even decades.

There were four days over the holiday when hospital casualty departments were overwhelmed with patients suffering from flu. Beds were full, trolleys were



A general practitioner with his patient in south London, 50 years ago; but perhaps nurses should take over the role traditionally played by GPs

Hulton Getty

wheeled out and the health service found itself unable to cope.

Nothing new there, of course. But when the causes of the winter crisis were investigated, it was GPs who got the blame. Because Christmas fell at a weekend, surgeries were closed for longer than normal. Out-of-hours deputising services were unable to cope and scores of sick patients took themselves off to their local accident and emergency departments.

What ministers saw as the failure of the primary care service over Christmas chimed with government plans for its reform. The Christmas crisis helped forge Tony Blair's speech in Birmingham earlier this month to a conference of GPs, nurses and managers in which he set out his vision of the NHS in the 21st century. A key aspect of that vision is instant access to medical advice when people need it.

Ministers are determined to do something about the problem of access, a key determinant of the way people perceive the NHS. Nurses, who would be contacted by telephone or via the Internet, would provide a filtering system, helping patients with minor ailments to treat themselves while referring trickier cases to... how shall we describe this new style of second-line

general practitioner? Not so much a family doctor, seeing everything that comes through the door of the surgery; more a "primary care consultant", perhaps.

Here we have the medical equivalent of 24-hour banking, an image used by Tony Blair last week. For everyday problems, patients would be able to seek instant advice, 24 hours a day from the nurse-run telephone helpline, NHS Direct, which is being rapidly rolled out across the country. Access points are to be established in post offices and libraries. Computer links (the medical cash machine) and a network of walk-in centres led by nurses would provide hands-on care. Doctors, like bank managers, would offer appointments for more serious problems.

It is, of course, far too early to tell how far this process will go. Much will depend on the response of the public and of the professional groups. But the direction of travel is clear. Stephen Thornton, director of the NHS Confederation, said the vision set out by the Prime Minister in Birmingham last week required "nothing short of a complete transformation".

It has, however, an undeniable logic to it. For more than two decades, health policy makers have

worried about using expensive trained doctors to hand out cough medicine and laxatives to the worried well. Surveys show that GPs consider many of the problems brought to them are trivial.

In the Seventies, there was talk of introducing Third-World-style barefoot doctors to the UK - medical orderlies who would sort the simple problems from the serious. What curbed these moves were warnings from the royal medical colleges that an apparently trivial symptom could hide a serious underlying disease. Only a trained doctor, taking a full history and making a proper investigation, could tell the difference. For patients to place their health in the hands of nurses risked disaster.

That view is now history. What has made the use of nurses possible as front-line practitioners is the development of computer-based protocols - lists of questions that cover all eventualities. The protocols used by NHS Direct have been adapted from America and so far the service has met with almost universal approval.

Surveys of callers in the three pilot sites have shown 97 per cent satisfaction with the advice received - even though it came only from a nurse. In some cases lives

have been saved, but more often patients who would otherwise have turned up at the surgery or accident and emergency department have been helped to deal with the problem at home, saving themselves the trip and the NHS a consultation.

Nurses are understandably enthusiastic, but GPs notably less so. They feel their territory invaded and their autonomy threatened. The BMA warns of threats to continuity of care and the doctor-patient relationship. It knows that if the role of GPs providing round-the-clock care to a defined list of patients is eroded, they could lose their coveted status as self-employed, independent contractors with the NHS.

But GPs have been living on borrowed time since 1995, when they negotiated an end to their contractual requirement to work at least some nights and weekends. Although they remain technically responsible for their patients 24 hours a day, in practice many work something close to normal office hours.

Now they are being reorganised into "primary care groups" comprising GPs, nurses, health visitors and other staff, which will ultimately control more than three-quarters of the NHS budget. These groups will serve populations of an average of 100,000, providing their primary

care and buying their hospital care within a fixed budget - the first time GPs have been cash-limited in this way. They will therefore have a financial incentive to encourage any innovation - such as the greater use of nurse-led advice and care - that improves their efficiency.

The strategy is, however, not without risk, as Professor Chris Ham, a health policy expert at the University of Birmingham, has warned. Britain has a unique system of general practice that provides care to the entire population and is admired across the world. Its strength lies in the personal relationship between patient and doctor. For many patients, who need only occasional attention, continuity of care by a familiar doctor may not matter. But for those with chronic conditions, who tend to be older, it matters more.

Bringing nurses into the medical front line is overdue and could yield real benefits for patients in terms of convenience and speed of access. But if the personal link between patient and doctor is broken, a pillar of the NHS will be lost. This will depend on whether the new nurse-led advice system is to be an additional service or merely a money-saving replacement for the traditional GP.

RIGHT OF REPLY

SHARON BREEN



A spokeswoman for the marital research charity One Plus One responds to a recent article by Robin Baker

WRITING FROM a purely biological perspective, Robin Baker ("The death of the nuclear family") ignores the evidence for the psychological and social value of shared parenting for both adults and children. In 1927 the American psychologist John Watson wrote: "Family standards have broken down. In 50 years, unless there is some change, the tribal custom of marriage will no longer exist." Yet more than 70 years later, marriage (or marriage-like relationships) remains a central element of our social structure.

True, the percentage of children who continue to live in couple families has fallen somewhat over the last 25 years, yet the fact is that four in five still do. But where is the evidence that many modern women choose to parent alone, as Mr Baker suggests?

Love parenthood is often a transitional phase in today's family formation. Each year, 10 per cent of these lone parents move into married or cohabiting relationships. Research indicates that emotional support is vital to mental and physical well-being. While some women prefer to parent alone, overall lone mothers perceive themselves to be less happy and more stressed, and to have less access to physical and emotional resources, than women living with a partner.

True, there is great uncertainty about the role of fathers. But many researchers think that quality fathering may provide children with unique benefits. Pre-schoolers whose fathers provide 40 per cent of their care demonstrate increased empathy, fewer sexual-stereotype beliefs, and "a greater richness of caring". Most people (including many lone parents themselves) still believe that it is better for a child to live with two parents where possible.

Ebb and flow of globalisation

THOSE WHO write about globalisation usually fall into two camps - all for it, or dead set against it. Both have one feature in common: scant regard for empirical evidence.

The trouble with a tendency to see globalisation as demanding the taking of sides is that it fixes the phenomenon as a sort of force of nature. It reduces the scope for discussion to a technocratic debate about economic policies without engaging with the technicalities, because that involves grubbing about in the statistics.

Indeed, despite the overlap between right-wing politics and the pro-globalisation camp on the one hand, and the left and anti-globalisation on the other, the usual reductionist approach is frustrating for



WEDNESDAY BOOK

GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS: POLITICS, ECONOMICS AND CULTURE
BY DAVID HELD & ANTHONY MCGREW, DAVID GOLDBLATT
& JONATHAN PERRATTON, POLITY PRESS, £16.99

those of us who are leftish in our politics yet in favour of globalisation for its potential. Old friends accuse us of selling out, abandoning our youthful radicalism for a Thatcherite embrace of the market.

What a delight, then, to find a book that analyses globalisation as a complicated set of processes that could in principle take many forms. While the underlying causes are unstoppable,

the shape they take is not. The right natural metaphor is not globalisation as a flood that will sweep all before it, but rather as a series of tides, subject to human intervention.

Too often globalisation is seen as a purely economic phenomenon. Its cavaliers and roundheads focus on the international financial markets, trade across borders, low wages in developing countries and investment by multinationals.

Economics is important, but so is the globalisation of culture and, perhaps most interestingly, the rule of law and democratic politics. The war in Kosovo, for example, and the extradition of General Pinochet, are examples of a new uncertainty about the territories over which any given set of political norms should apply.

In other words, as this book emphasises, globalisation has altered our understanding of political community. Democracy involves making policy decisions accountable to a particular community. This accountability must be formal - reflected in votes and representation - but is also informal, embedded in economic and social involvement. However, the nature of political communities, while obviously no longer confined to the nation state, is pretty hazy.

This raises truly profound questions about the nature of democracy and citizenship. What is the proper constituency for reaching a decision on, say, the import into Europe of American beef treated with the hormone BST? On the processing of nuclear waste? On targets for reducing green-



A Kosovar child tries on a US Air Force helmet

Michelle Leonard

house gas emissions? Or the regulation of the financial markets?

The authors of *Global Transformations* get three cheers for posing all the right questions. Given the breadth of their material - by its nature, globalisation can affect anything, everywhere - it would be churlish to expect answers, too. But they do rule out certain responses.

One is the argument that there is nothing very different about modern forms of globalisation: that turn-of-the-century imperialism had a similar scope. A mass of information makes it plain that trade and investment flows are bigger than they were a century ago, and have a wider reach and greater impact on societies affected.

Intriguingly, the book argues that, if there is a good historical parallel, it lies in the Middle Ages. Although there was no medieval equivalent of McDonald's or Microsoft, and the globe had not even been mapped, that too was a world of overlapping authorities and multiple loyalties. No ruler was sovereign; all shared power both with barons below and with

higher authorities. It is precisely this dispersion of powers that fuels the passion of both pro- and anti-globalisation camps. Markets, especially high-profile financial markets, are assumed to have captured power from elected national governments. James Carville, adviser to Bill Clinton in the 1992 presidential campaign, famously said that if he could be reincarnated, he would come back as the bond market. This book cites a graffiti from Poland: "We wanted democracy, but we ended up with the bond market."

But markets are processes rather than entities, and can have benign or malign results. Markets can act as a vehicle for democracy, undermining the entrenched interests of elites in undemocratic places. Or they can be shaped to benefit the elites at the expense of the many.

The virtue of *Global Transformations* is that it is neither for nor against. What it loses in populism it more than recoups in intellectual honesty.

DIANE COYLE

Oxfam KOSOVO Crisis Appeal

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WEDNESDAY POEM

RECOLLECTION OF MANCHESTER
BY PAUL VERLAINE, TRANSLATED BY NORMAN R SHAPIRO

A glimpse of Salford, just a corner, was
All that I saw of Manchester, because,
Thanks to the fog and to my clubfoot gait -
And hansom cabs that circumbulate
Everywhere else, it seems! - my efforts were
Sincere but vain; and so no connoisseur
Of Manchester am I. And yet, no matter:
Priggishly though the rest of you might matter,
Decri its factories, its industries,
Telling me how much more some towns would please
My intellectual's vanities! still, sweet
The memories of that Manchester "elite,"
There, in that tall - naive, no doubt, as when
They praised Racine, taking him for Verlaine! -
As I proclaimed, for better or for worse,
My utter reverence for Shakespeare's verse.

From 'One Hundred and One Poems' by Paul Verlaine: a bilingual edition, translated by Norman R Shapiro (University of Chicago Press, £19.95). © The University of Chicago. All rights reserved

Antonio Narducci

Señor Wences

IN THE film *Bells Are Ringing* (1960), Judy Holiday and Dean Martin are singing "Just in Time". In between the first and second chorus, they indulge in a playful exchange of Spanish accent-dialect: "S'okay?" "S'awright!" "S'awright?" "S'okay!" American audiences of the Sixties responded immediately to this quote from the variety act of the master ventriloquist Señor Wences, who was then being seen regularly on Ed Sullivan's hugely popular television show.

The film *Tin Men* was set in 1963, and rightly included a scene in which two salesmen (played by Bruno Kirby and Danny DeVito) chat over breakfast in a Baltimore diner: "You watch Ed Sullivan, right?"

"Right."

"Which act do you like better - the guy that spins the plates, or do you like the guy with the hand puppets?"

"Señor Wences - the hand puppets. I love the guy!"

"He's better than the guy who spins the plates?"

"Course he's better! Plus, he's got no overhead: the man's got a hand - and a box!"

The "box" contained Pedro, a disembodied talking head. The "hand" was Wences's own, which he transformed into his principal character Johnny - or "Yonny" as he called him, in a Spanish accent that retained its thickness for more than nine decades.

In comparing Wences to a plate spinner, *Tin Men*'s writer-director Barry Levinson was probably being mischievous, in as much as plate-spinning was another of the dapper Spaniard's specialties; he could actually throw his voice all over the stage, while spinning a heavy silver plate on a pole which rested on the bridge of his aristocratic nose.

Born in Salamanca in Spain in 1896, Wenceslao Moreno learned ventriloquism at an early age, throwing his voice around the classroom to answer "Present!" for friends who were, in fact, absent. At 15 he became one of Spain's youngest matadors. "My style in the bull-fight was very quiet," he told an interviewer. "Very elegant." He fought hundreds of bulls before being gored so seriously that he had to retire. To regain control of his injured arm, he learned juggling, becoming so practised that he found work in a circus. He also juggled in South American circuses before emigrating to the United States in 1934 and concentrating on ventriloquism.

He often recalled that at first he was "just another ventriloquist with a dummy", until that dummy was mangled in a train crash. As only the head survived, Wences was forced to walk on

stage for his next booking carrying a box containing a Pedro whose torso was conspicuous by its absence. Removing the lid, he asked with understandable concern, "Pedro, you are OK?" When the head replied in a sepulchral voice, "S'awright!", a catchphrase as well as a career was born.

To create his character Johnny (a hand puppet in the truest sense), he indicated a nose with a smudge of black eye pencil, drew a lipstick streak where his index finger met his thumb and then joined them to produce a mouth. After adding an auburn pageboy wig with wobbly plastic eyes attached to its fringe he placed the "head" on Johnny's body, a dummy torso dressed as Wences must have been dressed himself as a small boy in the early 1900s: a white-collared shirt, black shorts with buttoned-on straps, white stockings and black boots.

Johnny proceeded to sing a Spanish ballad in his falsetto voice, during which the Señor stuffed a handkerchief in his

Removing the lid, he asked the torso-less head, 'Pedro, you are OK?' When the head replied, 'S'awright!', a catchphrase as well as a career was born

"mouth". Johnny sang on, even when Wences began to smoke. He then offered his cigarette to Johnny, who inhaled and - to the bafflement of audiences, not to mention every other ventriloquist - somehow blew a series of perfectly formed smoke rings.

In 1942 Wences appeared on Broadway with the singer Jane Froman and the comedians Ed Wynn and Smith and Dale in *Laugh, Town, Laugh*. A vaudeville-style revue, it ran for only 65 performances.

The successful film *Mother Wore Tights* (1947) starred Betty Grable and Dan Dailey as Myrtle and Frank Burt, a blissfully married vaudeville team. Although the period of the story was turn-of-the-century, Wences played himself, entertaining the Burts' young daughters at a Christmas party. During his scene, the cameras were much closer than most ventriloquists would



Wences at home in New York aged 100

have liked, but his technical proficiency triumphed. The show-business historian Stanley Green succinctly described Wences's artistry as "sleight-of-mouth".

The following year, Wences made his television debut on Milton Berle's *Tarzan and the Seven Women*. This was followed by appearances on the Sid Caesar/Imogene Coca *Your Show of Shows*, *The Jack Benny Program*, *The Jack Paar Show*, and, of course, *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Sullivan asked him back more than 50 times. He also toured with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, played most of the hotels in Las Vegas and, in 1962, returned to Broadway in a variety show starring Danny Kaye.

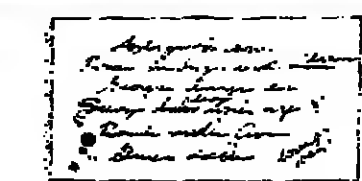
In the 1970s Wences moved to Paris, where, for several years he was one of the key attractions at the Crazy Horse Saloon. On his return to the United States, he appeared in such television

programmes as *It's Garry Shandling's Show* and *The David Letterman Show*, and at the age of 90 toured with Mickey Rooney and Ann Miller in the revue *Sugar Babies*.

Wences and Natalie, his wife for more than 50 years, were by then based in New York where, on his 100th birthday, the Friars Club gave him something few centenarians receive - lifetime membership. After stepping up, with the aid of a cane, to accept the honour, he paused dramatically at the microphone before asking "S'okay?" Then, from the opposite side of the stage, his deeper voice barked the inevitable "S'awright!"

DICK VOSBURGH

Wenceslao Moreno (Señor Wences), ventriloquist: born Salamanca, Spain 20 April 1896; married; died New York 20 April 1999.



LITERARY NOTES LAURA BEATTY

Royal mistress in a museum case

WHEN THE painter Walford Graham Robertson first saw Lillie Langtry he was so struck by her beauty that he stopped in the middle of Hyde Park Corner and had to be snatched from under the wheels of the approaching Barnes bus. When he reached the safety of the pavement Lillie had disappeared. "Clearly," he commented, "she had been an hallucination, she had no real existence. No human woman could be like that." Later, after she had died, he pursued the theme of Lillie's unreality. He wrote, "I could never feel that she had actual existence - the fantastic unreality of a dream was about her; she was a museum piece..."

So Lillie was a woman in a glass case - put there in the first place, by painters and poets for her flawless beauty, and kept there by her own determination, long after their admiration and her perfection had waned. The problem for her biographer is how to get her out - bow, at any rate, not to be just another visitor, nose pressed to the glass, viewing the front that Lillie chose to present to her public.

The best way of doing this would be to climb into the case alongside her; to ask, *and answer, the question, why was she there?* But any reply would be the result of speculation and speculation is not fashionable any more. It makes the reader nervous

and the reviewer open his mouth wide in horror.

This is strange in an age where we are generally and habitually psychologically friendly. Speculation does not need to be unfounded. To read a primary source, a diary or a letter, is to eavesdrop on a direct communication. To read a contemporary memoir is to listen to the first-hand account of a friend. Both can lead to a knowledge of their subject that is personal, a form of friendship of our own.

Biography is a curious hybrid. It combines historical method with emotional response. Its promise is familiarity and its practice betrayal. How could it be anything but personal? Why do we worry so much about being unobtrusive and impartial? Why do we strive after autopsy when we might instead create a ghost? Since we live in the heads of our friends, surely we should dare the same with our ancestors. Speculation, if it is conscientious and informed - if it is an attempt to understand, to explain but not excuse - is, quite literally, invigorating. It is one of the tools for bringing the past to life.

There are some subjects more suited to this treatment than others. Kings and queens, all those who have changed the course of history, do not need new technique. Their lives are happily told within the established chronological framework of

recorded events. Lillie Langtry's is not. She was whirled to fame at the age of 24. She was the mistress of the Prince of Wales, bore an illegitimate child in secret, skated past bankruptcy, was befriended by Oscar Wilde, became an actress, made a fortune, took up racing, made another, and died lonely and in exile at the age of 76.

What she did is lurid enough. What is more interesting to the modern mind is what it did to her. She is the perfect example of someone for whom speculative biography is a must. If we make no attempt to understand her choices, to unravel the tangle of her motivation, she will remain the museum piece that she was to her contemporaries.

Whether or not we recognise the challenge, it is time to expand. Our past is receding faster and faster. It ought to be possible to take a deep breath, to take confidence in the unchanging nature of human experience, and set up a new form of biography beside the old - one that will be looser, less tied to chronology, more thematic, and expressive of its own dynamic, full of reaction and speculation. There will always be much that will be wrong, but then, is anything ever exclusively right?

Laura Beatty is the author of *Lillie Langtry: manners, masks and morals* (Chello and Windus, £20)

GAZETTE

DEATHS

BRANFORD: Henrietta Diana Primrose Longstaff, celebrated children's author, 53, died of breast cancer, peacefully at home with her husband and three children on 23 April 1999. Private cremation. All welcome to attend celebration and reflection on her life and work at Southampton Art Gallery Civic Centre, Southampton, 5.30pm, Tuesday 4 May 1999. No flowers. Donations to Wessex Cancer Trust or Oxfam, c/o Co-operative Funeral Service, The Laurels Funeral Home, 461 Butts Road, Sholing, Southampton, telephone 01703 44822.

MUSMAN: On 25 April Chloé (née Holland), in Oxford, after a short illness. Beloved mother of Melanie and Rosalind, and grandmother of Laura, Laura, Michael and Ewan. Funeral at Oxford Crematorium 1 May at 11.30am.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

MEMORIAL SERVICES

BISHOP: A reception in memory of the late Sir George Bishop will be held at the Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR, on Thursday 27 May 1999 from 3pm to 5.30pm. Anyone wishing to make a donation in his memory, to encourage travel and exploration by young people, should send a cheque payable to the Royal Geographical Society at the above address, marking the envelope "George Bishop Fund". For GAZETTE, ring 0171-233 2012.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales opens the Dudley Stearns Distribution Centre, holders of the Prince of Wales's Award, at Crown Close, Wick Lane, London E2, and, as President, Business in the Community, visits the Passage Day Centre, St Vincent's, Cuffley Place, London SW1, and attends the Seaside in Believing Homelessness Seminar. The Duke of Kent, Grand Master, United Grand Lodge of England, attends the Annual Investiture at Freemasons Hall, London.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.20am, band provided by the Grenadier Guards.

BIRTHDAYS

Miss Ann-Margret, actress, 58; Mr Ian Beer, former Head Master, Harrow School, 68; Professor Hugh Bentall, cardiologist, 79; Mr Michael Breatley, psychoanalyst and cricketer, 57; Baroness Carnegie of Leaver, educationist and former councillor, 74; Sir Ivor Cohen, former chairman, Remploy, 68; Mr Andrew Colvin, Comptroller and City Solicitor, Corporation of London, 53; Commandant Elizabeth Craig-McPhee, former Director, WRNS, 72; Dr Kenneth Kaunda, former president of Zambia, 75; Miss Nicola LeFanu, composer, 52; Sir John Leonard, former High Court judge, 73; Earl Lloyd George of Dwyfor, underwriter, 75; Dr Michael Longfield, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Teesside, 71; The Right Rev Morris Madocks, Hon Assistant Bishop, Chichester, 71; Mr William Moodie, former chief constable, 58; Mrs Jeffrey Tate, conductor, 56; Mr John Thora, writer and former Headmaster, Winchester College, 74; Mr Garry Weston, chairman, Associated British Foods, 72; Mrs Helen Williams, former High Mistress, St Paul's Girls' School, 61; Mr Kenneth Williams, Chief Con-

stable, Norfolk, 55; Mr James Wray MP, 61.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Jean Audran, artist and engraver, 1887; Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, statesman and philanthropist, 1801; Sir James Erasmus Wilson, dermatologist, who, at his own expense, brought "Cleopatra's Needle" to London, 1859; Lionel Barrymore (Elythe), actor, 1878; Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, prime minister and dictator of Portugal, 1889; Adolphe Anthony Goossens, horn player, 1896; Oskar Schindler, businessman and humanitarian, 1908; Deaths: Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, composer, 1925; Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini, statesman, executed by Italian partisans 1945; Ed (Edward) James, actor, 1970; Francis Bacon, painter, 1992; Oliver Messiaen, composer and organist, 1992. On this day: the foundation stone of Salisbury Cathedral was laid, 1220; Pope Clement XII issued a bull condemning freemasonry, 1738; Captain Cook landed at, and named, Botany Bay and New South Wales, 1770; the crew of HMS Bounty, led by Fletcher Christian, mutinied, 1789; the

League of Nations was founded, 1919; Thor Heyerdahl and companions set off from Peru on the Kon-Tiki expedition, 1947. Today is the Feast Day of St Crocus of Roscrea, St Cyril of Turov, St Louis Grignon of Montfort, St Pamphilus of Sulmona, St Peter Mary Chanel, St Pollio, Saints Theodora and Didymus, St Valeria and St Vitalis. Today is also the first day of the Muslim New Year.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Alexander Sturgis, "Van der Weyden (iv): van der Weyden in Context", 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Nancy Osborn, "Women's Dress Cut and Construction 1730-1830", 2pm. British Museum: Della Pemberton, "Building and Builders in Ancient Egypt", 11.30am. National Portrait Gallery: John Tshaleko, Humphrey Ocean, Honor Clerk, "The Painter's Eye", 1.10pm. Royal Society of Arts, London WC2: Rear-Admiral Patrick Rowe, "Trinity House and the Millennium", 6pm. Wallace Collection, London W1: Robert Wooley, "Works of Art from the French Royal Collection", 1pm.

Jurisdiction to prevent anticipated proceedings

THE HIGH Court had power under the inherent jurisdiction to make orders restraining vexatious proceedings which were anticipated, not only in the High Court but also in the county court.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appeals of Gedaljah Ebert against orders restraining him from making further applications in certain proceedings.

The appellant had brought a series of vexatious proceedings against his trustee in bankruptcy and Mr Rolf Wolff, and against the liquidator of Euro-ride Ltd and the Midland Bank plc. As a result, the Attorney General had, on 4 December 1998, instituted proceedings against him under section 42 of the Supreme Court Act 1981. Those proceedings were yet to be heard.

The appellant appealed against two orders of Neuberger J dated 7 July 1998 and 23 October 1998 restraining him from making further applications in the current proceedings. On the appeals the issue arose, *inter alia*, whether the court had jurisdiction in appropriate circumstances to make *Grepe v Loom* orders prohibiting new proceedings being commenced without the leave of the court and, if so, whether the orders could prohibit county court proceedings as well as High Court proceedings.

The appellant appeared in person; Paul Emerson (Carter Backer Winter) for the trustee in bankruptcy; Robert Hantusch (Teacher Stern & Selby) for Mr Wolff; Gilead Cooper (Ince & Co) for Mr Robinson; us intervenor; Andrew Mitchell (Eversheds) for

WEDNESDAY LAW REPORT

28 APRIL 1999

Ebert v Birch and another; Ebert v Vanvil and another
Court of Appeal (Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Aldous)
30 March 1999

the Midland Bank plc; Ion Burnett QC (Treasury Solicitor) as amicus curiae.

Lord Woolf MR said that, notwithstanding the statutory power in section 42 of the Supreme Court Act 1981 to make an order on the application of the Attorney General to prevent the institution of proceedings without the leave of the High Court, the inherent jurisdiction of the court remained. It was however more restricted than the statutory power.

When approaching the question whether the inherent jurisdiction permitted the making of orders in the wider form permitted under statute, the starting point had to be the extensive nature of the inherent jurisdiction of any court to prevent its procedure being abused. There was no reason why, absent the intervention of a statute cutting down the jurisdiction, that jurisdiction should apply only in relation to existing proceedings and not to vexatious proceedings which were manifestly threatened but not yet initiated. The court could and did

grant injunctions to stay specific anticipated proceedings both in the English courts and abroad. Where the injunction was in relation to foreign proceedings, the jurisdiction was not exercised by interfering with the foreign court. Instead, the injunction was granted against an individual and was enforceable personally against that individual. The ability of the court to operate in that way when the proceedings were only anticipated was no more than an example of the court being prepared to protect an applicant from anticipated damage when that damage was sufficiently imminent and serious.

The court undoubtedly had the power to stay or strike out vexatious proceedings when they were commenced, and there was no reason in principle why it should not also, in accord with the general approach to the granting of *quia timet* injunctions, exercise that power to prevent the serious loss that anticipated but unidentified proceedings could cause the defendants to those proceedings.

If the court had jurisdiction to make an order in relation to proceedings anticipated but not yet initiated in the High Court, there was no doubt that the High Court had power to make such an order in relation to the county court as well. The county court would give effect to a High Court order in the same way as it would give effect to a county court order.

It would be absurd today when there was a process of merger between the High Court and the county court if it were necessary for a separate order to be made in the county court.

KATE O'HANLON
Barrister

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

YESTERDAY, I discussed Viswanathan Anand's possible "Ultimate World Chess Championship" match with Garry Kasparov this October.

Easily faster than any other player I've ever analysed or had a post-mortem with - Kasparov, Karpov and Tal included - Anand to work with was once (some while ago, as you can tell from the outdated hardware analogy) likened by John Nunn to grappling with a Pentium-100 while you yourself were a 486-33!

Like any title contender, Anand is quite singular and he has created no "Indian Chess School" in his wake. But they do have some other strong players including two grandmasters, the 32-year-old Dib-masters Barua and Praveen Thipsay, who will be 40 this year. Meanwhile much the most promising prospect is I.M. Krishnan Sasikiran, who was 18 in January.

I first met Sasikiran at the British Championships two years ago in Hove, where he impressed me both with his apparently effortless command of

tactical *mélées* and his great self-confidence; and although I had the White pieces in our game, I ended up having to take some care to make a draw. Last year in Torquay he was less impressive against me, though we still drew, but he showed himself to great advantage with draws against Short and Sadler, both of whom he came close to defeating. Sasikiran had a disaster at the Goodricke Open in Calcutta in February, scoring abysmally against his countrymen and women. But he recovered splendidly (in the absence, of course, of Anand but also Barua) to take first place in the Indian Championship in Nagpur - a monumental event running from 27 March to 12 April - with 13/17 (11 wins, four draws and two losses) a point ahead of Thipsay 12, another good prospect, 22-year I.M. Abhijit Kunte, and G.B. Prakash (who's 27) on 11.

This second-round win against his main rival shows another facet of Sasikiran's play: excellent technique in an advantageous middlegame and

then potentially treacherous rook ending.

White: Krishnan Sasikiran
Black: Praveen Thipsay
King's Indian Defence
1 d4 Nf6 30 Rc5 Rd7
2 c4 g6 31 Rxd7 Rd1+
3 Nc3 Bg7 32 Kh2 Bb5
4 e4 d6 33 Nd2 Rd8
5 Nb3 0-0 34 Nc4 Bf6
6 Be2 Na6 35 R5a6 Kg7
7 0-0 e5 36 Bxh6+ Kxh6
8 Be3 Ng8 37 Rxf6 Kg7
9 Bg5 Qe8 38 Rd6 Bx4
10 dxe5 h6 39 Rxd8 Rxd8
11 Bd2 dxe5 40 bxc4 Rd2
12 h3 Nf6 41 G Rec2
13 Be3 Qe7 42 c5 Kg5
14 Nd5 Qd8 43 c5 Kg5
15 Qc1 Kh7 44 e4 f5
16 Rd1 Nd7 45 Rb5 Kf4
17 c5 e6 46 a5 e4
18 Bxa6 cxd5 47 fxe4 Bxe4
19 Rxd5 bxa6 48 a6 g3
20 c5 Qe8 49 f7 Ra2
21 cxd7 Bxd7 50 Rb7 e2
22 Rc5 Qe6 51 Re7 Rxa7
23 Qc4 Rf8 52 Rxd2 Rc7
24 Qxe6 Bxe6 53 Rc2 Re5
25 Ra5 Rc4 54 Rc4+ Ke3
26 Rxa6 Rxe4 55 Kg5 g5
27 b3 Rd4 56 Kg4 Kd3
28 Rf1 Rb7 57 Rc1 Kd2
29 Rc5 Re8 58 Rf1 1-0

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

BEFORE I tell the story of this deal, consider the East hand. After two passes at game all, would you (if available) open a Weak Two Hearts? For some players it would be automatic, but I would argue that (a) the suit is not strong enough, (b) there's too much defence. Look what happened when East did not worry about these factors and did open Two Hearts.

South overcalled with 2 no-trumps (17-19 points, natural); North raised to 3 no-trumps. So North-South avoided (missed?) their 4-4 spade fit where game would surely have failed. Also, West led ♠J to queen, ace and three - giving South two tricks in the suit. East returned ♠10, which would have paid off if his partner had led from ♠J 9 precisely. South won. Next came a diamond to the king and East held off to shut out the suit.

South continued with a losing spade finesse and West switched to ♠Q. After winning, declarer led another diamond. Again East ducked but took the next diamond and returned lead of ♠Q - but you will be unlikely to find it at the table.)

Game all; dealer West	
North	
♠ A 6 3 2	
♥ Q 3	
♦ K Q J 9 3	
♣ 7 4	
West	
♠ K 10 8 7	
♥ J 7	
♦ 10	
♣ J 10 9 6 5	
East	
♠ 5	
♥ A 10 8 6 5 4	
♦ A 8 5 4	
♣ 8 3	
South	
♠ A Q J 4	
♥ K 9 3	
♦ 7 6 2	
♣ A K 2	

to reveal the position in the suit. Now he had an easy exit with a club to end-play West who was now marked with an original 4-2-1-4 distribution and had been forced to part with three clubs.

If East had returned a club at trick two? No matter - South wins and plays a diamond. If East wins this and plays another club, the spade finesse is not needed; if East ducks the diamond, the same sort of black suit end-play finishes West. I leave you to work out the winning play after an opening lead of ♠Q - but you will be unlikely to find it at the table.)

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER

HAWTREE

candied, adj.

Evening Argus, the agony aunt Rebecca Gray advises a woman whose boyfriend keeps buying her exiguous underwear - even though

she never wears it: "Be very candied and just tell it like it is." A perfect, inadvertent word for sweetening the pill (Ms Gray's editor also twice let through "me" for "my"). And, in the North Laines of Brighton, a huge, painted sign calls it a "Conversation Area" - churlish, then, of the residents to object to another café.

You ask the questions

(Such as: David Bailey, did Ronnie Kray pay you to take his wedding photographs – or did you do it as a favour?)

David Bailey, 61, was born in Leytonstone, east London. His first job was as a debt collector for a well-known boxing referee. At 17 he did a year's conscripted service in the RAF, then blagged a job with top studio photographer John French. He had no formal training in photography. Less than two years later, aged 21, he shot his first cover for *Vogue*. Bailey has been married four times and has three children. *David Bailey: Archive One, 1957-1989* by Martin Harrison is published by Thames & Hudson. An exhibition of Bailey's work during this period is showing at the Barbican, London EC2, to 27 June.

Why is it that black-and-white photography always seems somehow more "beautiful" than colour?
Gina Gregory, Hammersmith, London
Black and white leaves it open to people's imagination. My daughter once asked me if the world was black and white when I was young.

You're identified in most people's minds as a man of the Sixties; in particular, with a time in which class barriers were being rapidly eroded. Is that how you remember it?
Roger Beauclerc, Hackney, London

The Sixties was a time of breaking down class barriers, although I think class still exists today in some areas.

Some people think you have a deep-rooted dislike of women. Would you describe yourself as a misogynist?
Caro Gentle, Halifax
If some people think this, they must also think I'm a masochist, as I have loved more women in my life than men. Ask my women friends – they will reassure you I am always on their side.

How do you rate William Eggleston?
C Brown, Bournemouth, Dorset
I think William Eggleston's great.

How has photography as a profession changed since the Sixties? Which of today's photographers do you rate?
Andy Henderson, Gateshead
Photography is more about money now but then so are most things. I photographed Juergen Teller and liked him very much.

Did Ronnie Kray pay you for taking his wedding photos, or did you take them as a "favour"?



Mark Baxter, Camberwell, London
Ronnie Kray did not pay me. It was a favour.

Do you listen to music as you work? If so, what?
Himesh Patel, Leicester
Almost everything from Bach up, but not too much current pop.

What's your favourite memory of Terence Donovan?
Alex Spufford, Cambridge
Ironically, his last for life.

You have lived with some of the most beautiful women in the world. What's your secret?

Aaron Clare, Hammersmith, London
Humour.

Who has "star quality" these days?
Else Rebeck, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks
Johnny Depp, Naomi Campbell, Kate Moss, Damien Hirst.

What did your wife used to think when you took pictures of her in very private moments? Or perhaps the wife of a photographer has no private moments?
Roger Jones, Odham, Hants
My wife is the greatest living person and I respect her more than anyone. I always try to be honest with my pictures and not hide anything. Authors do the same thing

but it is just more diffused. They can distort more than a photograph.

Is there anyone you have never photographed, and would like to?
R Wade, London
Castro. He's the last great icon, like Mao, Stalin, Einstein etc. I make no moral judgement. I know everything should be photographed. It helps me make sense of my existence.

During your long career, has a model ever refused to pose, or had a tantrum in your studio?
Tara Smurfit, Belfast
No, they're only late.

Are there any models you have photographed and not had sex with?
Selma Choudhury, London
A few.

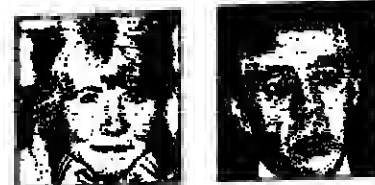
What's the best camera you ever had?
Ed Rowner, Hamilton
Two Leica Rolleiflex and an Olympus M1u.

Catherine Deneuve first thing in the morning: nice or nasty?
John O'Sullivan, Edinburgh
Crump.

Do you take better photographs of subjects that you have become personally involved with? Which model/celebrity,

NEXT WEEK

JILLY COOPER,
FOLLOWED BY
JACK STRAW



SEND QUESTIONS for novelist Jilly Cooper and Home Secretary Jack Straw to: You Ask the Questions, Features, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2182, or e-mail yourquestions@independent.co.uk), by 12 noon on Friday 30 April

has had the "face" of the 20th century? Mr SA Ledger-Lomas, *Formby, Merseyside*
It is easier to work with people one knows, as did Fellini, Bergman, Ford, Jean Shrimpton is my "face" of the 20th century.

You like to make out you're sexist, yet your pictures of women, especially the early ones, suggest a reverence for them that betrays your words. Which is the real you?

Tom Baxter, *Middlesbrough*
I have never been a sexist. My mother and my aunt Dolly formed me. My great loves have been strong women. I have more women friends than men. If I have any sexist feelings they are aimed at men: I hate manly men. Four men in a car talking about football is my idea of hell.

Are you a member of the family that makes that lovely drink you have at Christmas?
Debs Ross, Crouch End, London
As nobody drinks in my family, I can't answer your question.

The faces of many of the models in the fashion pages give the impression of over-indulgence in drugs or sex, a low intelligence, an unbelievable boredom. Assuming that the models are deemed necessary, why is it that women readers are not discouraged from buying the clothes?
John M Wilson, Beverley, Yorkshire
I think you are taking a low-intelligence view of the fashion magazines given by the tabloids. People get what they want. It's called supply and demand.

Just too good to be true

Nurses have ditched Florence Nightingale as their founding mother because she was autocratic and bullying. But what use is a shy patron? Heroes are not to be confused with real people. By John Walsh

THE NIGHTINGALE has crash-landed. One hundred and forty-eight years after Florence Nightingale arrived at Scutari Hospital in the Crimea and turned it into a pitilessly scrubbed and scrupulously hygienic place where wounded soldiers might be treated without dying from an infection picked up from one of the pillows, her reputation lies in ruins. The Lady with the Lamp is herself being extinguished.

The founding mother and patron saint of modern nursing had a metaphorical kidney-dish flung at her maternally head by nursing delegates who attended the Union conference in Brighton on Monday. Several speakers complained that Nightingale was an outdated and politicised icon of nursing – white, middle-class, English and Protestant – and thus inappropriate for the multi-racial, classless, pan-global profile of the nursing community in the year 2000. Anyway, they threw in, she was a real bitch to her staff and sucked up to all the doctors.

In a gesture reminiscent of a court-martialled officer having his sword broken over the CO's knee, speakers demanded that the Congress of Nurses stop holding their international Nurses' Day on 12 May, Florence's birthday. That'll teach her. They just about stopped themselves from digging her up and giving her a good kicking.

Though the nurses are a little late in "exorcising the myth" of Florence Nightingale – Lytton Strachey did a pretty thorough job of it in *Eminent Victorians*, published in 1918 – the principle behind their revisionist cries is a fascinating one. It calls into question the kind of people we feel we need to have as our leaders, figureheads, patrons, saints, icons, accredited superstars, the things we require of them, and the changing needs of the flock the faithful, the rank and file, the worshippers. Whether or not Mrs Nightingale was the real "founder of nursing" rather than, say, Elizabeth Fry, the social reformer, she undoubtedly brought a new, steady, antiseptic



Saint or celebrity? WG Grace and Florence lose out to Delia and Ginola. *Hulton/Getty/PA*

rigour to patient healthcare that still, thank goodness, prevails.

She became the image of the matron who gets things done, and that is her whole point. Whether someone else "inspired" her or not, wrote more of the nursing rule book, or was nicer to her juniors is beside the point. Our heroes are embodiments of supposed virtues. They aren't to be confused with real people.

ple. WG Grace is the central icon in cricketing history, because he scored, bowled and caught opponents out like a bearded machine sent to destroy the enemy. Is the MCC likely to call for his posthumous resignation because a recent biography revealed the Victorian slogger to be, at the human level, a curmudgeon, an overgrown schoolboy and illiberal segregationist of amateurs and professionals?

I don't think so. It's hard, likewise, to imagine Geoffrey Chaucer ever being dethroned from his position as "the father of English Literature" because the Gawain-poet got there before him, because Chaucer once held the rebarbative positions of customs officer and knight of the shires, or because some of the ruder *Canterbury Tales* involve Curry On material about bottoms and lyften-up smocks.

Both Grace and Chaucer sustain, unchallenged, in the hearts of the faithful because we instinctively respond to their largeness. We make patrons and saints out of people who bully us a little, who tell us what to do.

A century ago it was Mrs Beeton, whose *Household Management* you weren't allowed to peel a parsnip without consulting. Now that her recipes for Braised Squirrel and Elderflower Cordial are no longer required, we've let

Delia Smith boss us around, and take on Mrs Beeton's Do-as-I-say-and-huy-his-to-morrow-morning iconic mantle.

There are those of us who sometimes felt intimidated by Mother Teresa of Calcutta – that combination of goodness and give-up-everything single-mindedness, her implied reproach to the lazy, uncaring

generality of mankind. We felt bullied by her goodness, doomed to feel morally stunted. So we made her a saint in order to save our conscience. Look at that, we said, Marvellous, isn't she? Just not quite human...

Today's legends represent a sorry decline from these pungent mythologies. The modern "figurehead" or "patron" is the means by which public sympathies may be enlisted for a cause; and all that's required of them is an off-the-peg celebrity.

The nature of whatever it is they're supporting need have no special relevance to their life. When the Red Cross need a new "patron" to attract attention to their Landmine charity, following the death of the Princess of Wales, who do they call? David Ginola, the glamorous football star whose connection with war zones and legless people is confined to the last time his own team played against Arsenal.

When the World Wildlife Fund needs royal patronage, they sign up Prince Philip, a chronic and proselytising huntsman, in the teeth of all logic and sympathy.

And now that the singer Sinead O'Connor has become a priest – she became Mother Bernadette Mary of the Latin Tridentine church last week – we can expect her to be signed up as an "appropriate" icon-heroine, by one of the caring professions, any day now.

It's fundamentally an image thing. If only one could zip back to Scutari in 1854 and explain to Florence Nightingale that her martinet behaviour – her determination to get her own way, her courting of senior hospital medics to get what she wanted – are just doing her future reputation no favours.

THE IRRITATIONS OF MODERN LIFE

38. LAVATORY ATTENDANTS BY HANNAH BAYMAN

BUNNY GIRLS at Hugh Heimer's Playboy mansion notoriously visited the bathroom in pairs. For me, at school, lavatory cubicles were places to hide out with mates, the fashion being to squeeze in as many as possible, like students in a Mini.

Into womanhood, a trip to the loo was still so much more fun if it was shared. Like the back stage of a theatre, the ladies' was a place to regroup, touch up make-up and swap notes. For the chucked, spurned or hopelessly pissed, it was somewhere to weep and wail in relative privacy, with friends on hand to dab your eyes with lavatory paper before you headed back to the fray.

But then came the advent of the lavatory attendant – and the atmosphere of camaraderie that once hung thick in the ladies' began to evaporate like old air-freshener. At first, it was only the larger night-clubs that bothered with attendants to keep an eye on drunken loogers. To soften their presence they offered a selection of toiletries and, initially, it was fun to freshen your scent or rent a hairbrush mid-evening. But it has become increasingly difficult to have a pee in peace in even the most average city-centre pub.

In cramped conveniences across Britain, surly attendants now sit at the sinks, barring your way until a stall is free. Flanked by bottles of hairspray, they thrust a paper napkin into your palm as you exit the cubicle, leaving you feeling like a five-year old who has been chided for not remembering to wash his hands. After taking the tissue, it is a brave visitor who can turn tail without leaving 50 pence on the silver tip dish. Nothing less will do (all small change is removed at once, discouraging others from daring to be cheap). It's hard to be mean about someone who



Loo attendants are not always so friendly

spends their working life stuck in a lavatory. But the attendants are so often the female equivalent of belligerent bouncers, harking and even grabbing at punters who step out of line. Littering is not allowed and sharing cubicles is banned; the last time I tried I was actually pulled away by the arm.

Marilyn Monroe knew what the little girls' room was really for. In one film, she excused herself to pay a visit, darting back seconds later to collect her forgotten powder-puff.

"What else would a girl do in a powder room but powder her nose?" she asked her male companion with wide-eyed innocence. But these days, powdering one's nose is often less innocent. Proprietors who want to hang on to their licences are using attendants to try to stop drug-taking on the premises.

As well as policing the lavatories, some of the smartest bars have even installed cisterns without lids to leave customers nowhere to chop up lines. Problem is, it leaves the rest of us girls nowhere to balance our Archer's and lemonade, never mind the powder-puff.

A little order in your life

Cheesy models. Naff clothing. Tasteless trinkets. That's mail order catalogues for you. Think again, says Rebecca Lowthorpe.
Upmarket mail order provides stress-free shopping for discerning shoppers whose leisure time is at a premium

Are you too busy to shop? Do you suffer from what Doctor Cary Cooper calls "time famine"? Cooper knows all about it. As professor of occupational psychology at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, he compiles Umist's annual Quality of Working Life survey, analysing the lifestyle of 5,000 UK-based managers every year. "Gone are the days when we had lots of personal disposable time," he says. "Work now intrudes into everybody's personal space." If you know how that feels, then perhaps you should consider the unthinkable and pick up the phone.

The mail order catalogue, traditionally considered as terminally naff as toilet-roll dummies, has turned into the most sophisticated, not to mention the easiest, way to go shopping.

Until recently, catalogues the size of freeze blocks would thud on to the doormat. You know, the ones with endless pages of lawnmowers, DIY tools and garden sheds sandwiched in between the "luxury" items: gold-plated trinkets, leather three-piece suits and those unforgettable mantelpiece "must-haves" - porcelain ladies carrying parasols.

Models posed with cheesy smiles; the men, one hand placed strategically on the hip, looked stiff-as-boards in dodgy shiny blazers and Sta-prest trousers; the women, equally artificial in their make-up masks, posed in foot-long thermal knickers. The old-hat catalogue had about as much visual panache as a copy of *Meatpucker's Journal*.

Mail order was for the blue-collar class, who bought expensive goods on "buy now, pay later" terms and were fleeced into the bargain by absurdly high interest rates.

It's all changed now. Ever since George Davies launched the *Next Directory* 10 years ago - a slim, stylish coffee-table book instead of one with the size and aesthetic appeal of a telephone directory - mail order has gradually moved upmarket.

Indeed, it says a lot about mail order's new-found sophistication when The Cross, a shop based in west London's affluent Notting Hill and regularly profiled in *Vogue*, starts producing a catalogue.

"It's for all those people who can't reach us in London, and for everyone whose worst nightmare is thrashing around shops every Saturday," says Sara Conroy, mail order director of The Cross. It's a natty booklet, reminiscent of a glossy magazine supplement, which specialises in exclusive products: lounging-around clothes by hip label Dosa (orchid flip-flops, £25, silk sari bags £45), sweet childrenswear by Little Badger, and lots of home knick-knacks that look more than worthy of the pages of *Elle Decoration*.

Small businesses that offer eclectic, unusual bits and bobs, and not the sort of blanket uniformity that sometimes seems to wash over the high street, may only have one retail outlet in London, which is pretty hopeless if you live in, say, Glasgow or Birmingham. Mail order completely changes that accessibility.

Take APC, the hip, urban clothing company based in France, which started mail order in direct response to those who couldn't reach its 15 stores worldwide. APC is well worth a look. Not only are its jeans second-to-none, and a snip at £48, but its stringent

range - the perfect shirt dress, cropped trousers, Cuban shirts, shorts, bikini, beach bags and the like - are presented in a no-fuss, modern booklet. APC's designer, Sylvie Besse, is into anything that can't be bought en masse, hence the rigorous editing of her collections, even down to the music selection. "I wanted to distribute CDs along with the clothes because huge stores are so frustrating with their endless items," she says.

It's the small, independent store philosophy - that of individual, quality goods matched with a personal service - which has steadily leaked into the mail order market, transforming it beyond recognition.

Toast, a company based in Carmarthenshire, may not have a store, but dive into its catalogue - yet another slick booklet full of desirables - and you automatically get the impression that the modern, easy pyjama shapes in muslin, cotton and silk have been designed with the individual in mind. So utterly simple that it's up to you to dress them up or down. It's also up to you whether you buy into the Toast lifestyle - heavy, crisp bed linen, Syrian tea glasses, large "bricks" of soap and even Seville orange marmalade can also wing their way to you within seven working days, courtesy of the Royal Mail.

It's not only small, quirky companies whose catalogues are a visible treat. Another tip is *Space NK*, the apothecary mail order catalogue with cosmetic delicacies from Kiehl's, Philosophy and Nars. Even the traditional big "books" are moving with the times. Littlewoods catalogue, now in a more palatable bite-size format, includes designer collections by John Richmond and Ally Capellino. *The Book*, slickest of the big hitters, showcases ranges by the ever-popular Joseph, Whistles, Betty Jackson, Jasper Conran and Ben de Lisi, and shoes by Robert Clergerie and Patrick Cox.

Meanwhile, most of the high street has entered the mail order market as another way to entice the time-pressured consumer. Newest player on the block is French Connection Buy Mail, set up last year, whose tag line "Too Busy To FCUK" neatly encapsulates the changing social (indeed, lack of it) trend.

The traditional profile of the mail order customer - the lowest socio-economic group - no longer exists. Today, all of us are targeted by the home shopping market. Market research company Mintel estimates the total home-shopping market to be worth almost £8bn in 1997. Clothing and footwear accounts for nearly 60 per cent of all mail orders.

Quite simply, we have less time to do anything, let alone shop. "Nearly 40 per cent of us work at the weekend at home, mostly on computers," Cooper says. "During the week, the average family is going to work earlier and leaving later. People are burned out when they get home; the last thing

they want to do is shop in people-polluted environments, which is why more consumers are shopping from home."

So are you feeling burnt out? Pick up the phone. You might be in for a big surprise.

White organza dress (T1N27, pg 3), £75, by French Connection Buy Mail 0870 606 3285; cushions, from a selection (PA827080, pg 204), £12, from The Book; white Ramses sandals, £39.95, by Birkenstock enquiries 0800-132 194

Photographer: Anna Stevenson
Stylist: Holly Wood
Make-up: Firyal Mooney using Christian Dior Hair; James Mooney at Windel using Philosophy
Model: Myriam Little at Bookings



French Connection Buy Mail - 0870 606 3285. Set up last year owing to increased demand from French Connection's customers, the Buy Mail catalogue is slick and easy to follow with some great good buys. From a grey linen tailored suit, £140, to simple jersey clamdiggers, £45 and embroidered cardigans, £80. Birkenstock - 0800 132 194. Purveyor of the hippest summer sandals, Birkenstock is the number one in comfort and price, from £32.95. Littlewoods - 0345 888 222. Now in a more palatable bite-size format.

Littlewoods includes designer ranges by John Richmond and Ally Capellino. Elvira - 0171-736 9944. The cashmere specialist has just launched a baby range, Baby Direct. Packages start at £24 for a pure Scottish wool baby blanket to a luxury package at £149 which includes blanket, cashmere booties, mittens and cardigan. Racing Green - 0990 788 898. Great basics, including the ever-popular Simone trouser, £49, said to fit and flatter any shape. Ghost - www.ghost.ltd.uk - Available on the Internet. Ghost's classic styles -

straight-leg trousers, slim shirts, slip dresses and T-shirts - are produced every season. Available in black or white in machine-washable viscose crepe. Prices start at £70 for a camisole; long bias-cut dress, £110. La Redoute - 0500 777 777. An excellent alternative to slogging around in search of your favourite designers, such as Joseph and super-chic French designer Eric Bergere. Toast - 01558 66 88 00. The fashion editor's favourite, Toast's mini booklet is full of desirables. Clothes are easy pyjama shapes; cotton summer

nightshirts £39, linen-shirt dresses £45 and cotton apron trousers £32 - they look luxurious but you wouldn't know it from the prices. Check out the soap bricks, bed linen and Syrian tea-glasses. Johnny Loves Rosie - 0171-375 3574. Famed for their originality on the accessory front. Unusual floral or printed flip-flops £12.95, sheer shopper bags in cute colours from £14.95, along with a massive range of floral and diamante hair-clips and pretty dragonfly slides, £8.95 a pair. For a bohemian look - printed or plain headscarves, £14.95, and glamorous

chokers embroidered with sequins and coloured beads, £35. Kingshill - 01494 890 555. From catwalk to catalogue: Joseph, Jean Muir, Paul Costelloe and Amanda Wakeley are just a few of the British-based designers showcased in Kingshill, the up-market hardback fashion book. TMI Lewin - 0171-515 3360. The renowned Jermyn Street shirtmaker is the best place to stock up on crisp, summer shirts. Available plain or in gingham checks - all the colours of the rainbow, from £49-£60.



Red crochet vest (YJ0647, pg 21), £27, from Littlewoods, (enquiries 0345-888 222); denim jacket (J15020, pg 26), £75, by APC (00331-49 87 04 04); green hat (M84010X23, pg 121), £9.99, by Next Directory, (0345-600 700)



Orange jumper (V34144F, pg 10), £65, denim shorts (R18027F, pg 15), £35, both by A.P.C.; check bag (0045, pg 29), £14, from The Cross Catalogue, enquiries 0171-221 8616 (catalogue costs £2.50)



Fuchsia crochet dress (N0576380, pg 33), £90, by Karen Millen, from The Book, enquiries 0800 3288 488; silver compact (0036/0149, pg 25), £26, by Stila, from Space NK, enquiries 0870-169 9999

MAIL ORDER LISTING 15 OF THE BEST

APC - 00 331 49 87 04 04. France-based APC offers a sharp collection of hip urban basics, such as a pale blue shirt dress, £67, and Cuban shirt, £30. Don't forget to check out the eclectic CD discography, the Tunisian extra-virgin olive oil or the camouflage tape-great for wrapping presents. The Cross - 0171-221 8616. Buy into the ultimate Notting Hill lifestyle courtesy of The Cross, whose new catalogue puts *Elle Decoration* to shame. Long-sleeve linen rib tops, £95, by Dosa; denim espadrilles, £22. Great for presents. Like Interflora, The Cross

will send your personal message. The Book - 0800 3288 488. Slick catalogue showcasing ranges from favourite British designers - Joseph, Whistles, Betty Jackson, Jasper Conran and Ben de Lisi. Also shoes by Robert Clergerie, DKNY and Patrick Cox. Space NK - 0870 169 9999. Yummy pots and potions from the entrepreneurial Nicki Kinnaird, whose new age apothecary shops turned beauty retailing on its head in the early 1990s. Goodies from Kiehl's, Philosophy, Nars, Bumble & Bumble and Stila.

French Connection Buy Mail - 0870 606 3285. Set up last year owing to increased demand from French Connection's customers, the Buy Mail catalogue is slick and easy to follow with some great good buys. From a grey linen tailored suit, £140, to simple jersey clamdiggers, £45 and embroidered cardigans, £80. Birkenstock - 0800 132 194. Purveyor of the hippest summer sandals, Birkenstock is the number one in comfort and price, from £32.95. Littlewoods - 0345 888 222. Now in a more palatable bite-size format.

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Prophet of the absurd

A pig who goes to the moon. A soldier who tells the future through his buttocks. Victor Pelevin's satirical novels of post-Soviet Russia are bestsellers – and have made him the reluctant heir apparent to Gogol. By Jasper Rees

Victor Pelevin is the future of the Russian novel. His satires take the temperature of post-Soviet Russia, in all its amoral, dystopian chaos. *The Clay Machine-Gun*, just translated into English, has sold more than 200,000 copies on its native territory. *Generation P*, recently published, has shifted 70,000 in less than a month, and sits proudly at the top of the bestseller list. In a reading culture where the stock-market rating of literary fiction has never been lower, he is a phenomenal blip.

In Russia, this sort of pre-eminence brings with it a practically official position, like the patriarch of the orthodox church. Pelevin ought to be apprenticed to the prophet Solzhenitsyn, making ready to take over as the conscience of the motherland, in the footsteps of Yevgeny Zamyatin, Gorky and Tolstoy. He should also be a household name. But here he is, freshly landed in London, doing what he never does on home turf. He's giving an interview, and having his picture taken.

In *The Clay Machine-Gun*, Pelevin takes a hilarious swipe at the cult of literary celebrity. We're in the middle of nowhere in the civil war of 1919. One night, a ramshackle branch of communist irregulars are entertained by a soldier who can tell the future by talking through the cheeks of his posterior. Pelevin's narrator, seen in his gift a grim prophecy for the future of the arts. "Poems will only be considered interesting if it is known on the basis of sound documentary evidence that their author has two pricks, or at the very least, that he is capable of rectifying them through his arse."

The novel commutes between 1919, with Russia in revolutionary turmoil, and 1991, with Russia in counter-revolutionary turmoil. Its cautionary structure invites the reader to be aware that "a culture constantly reproduces the same forms". Thus Pelevin's fears for literature at the birth of Communism remain just as current after the death of Communism. "Poetry ceased to exist," says Pelevin of the coming of the free market. "Then only pulp started to sell. First it was Western pulp, and then Russians started to produce their own pulp, which is much worse, actually." With writers now having to flog themselves in bookshops and on television, Pelevin's choice has been to withdraw entirely from domestic promotional chores and abstain from the babel of public discourse.

"For me it's just more convenient. For some reason it's believed that writers are interesting as persons. I don't think that I'm an interesting person. When you are asked what you think about this and that, in 90 per cent of cases you don't think anything about it at all." He has even fallen into the habit of visiting a monastery in Korea for weeks at a time to empty his mind of that final 10 per cent. I ask him when, with his atheist upbringing, he discovered Buddhism. "Oh, I think a couple of lives ago."

Hence the sunglasses. "I am



"If there is a great Russian literary tradition, it is a constant denial of everything that was done before"

Martin Chuzzle

naturally shy. I hate physical attention. It's torture. I am wearing these sunglasses because it's the only way to be photographed without being photographed." It makes him look like a character from *A Life of Insects*, his novel set in a Black Sea holiday camp in which a rabble of low-lifers – tarts, tramps, pushers – mutate back and forth into varieties of insect.

Pelevin is at a loss to explain his popularity. "I just write books that I would like to read myself. Reading and writing is actually the same process. When you write you are just the first reader. Perhaps my taste just coincided with the taste of the majority." But it's clear that his finger-on-the-pulse iconoclasm appeals to the perestroika generation, who have only ever known freedom of speech (Pelevin has an unfashionable admiration for Gorbachev).

In *Generation P*, all politicians are computer-generated images, "like Max Headroom, but on very sophisticated machines".

Pelevin's engagement with the apparatus and imagery of low-brow culture has infuriated the critical pharisees who zealously protect the Russian literary tradition. "This is bullshit about the great Russian tradition, because if there is any Russian literary tradition it is a constant denial of everything that was done before, and that's how it develops." Having said that, with his surreal fusion of oriental and sci-fi, there's no mistaking Pelevin's place in the absurdist pantheon alongside Gogol and Bulgakov "a genius".

In *Omon Ra*, his first novel to gain international attention, Pelevin dissected the Party's lunatic fringe in a story about a hog whose ambition is to travel to outer space. "I re-

alised once and for ever that only weightlessness could give man genuine freedom," says the hog, and pretty soon he's drafted by the Soviet space programme to man an "unmanned" one-way mission to the dark side of the moon. It's a marvellous fable about the lies disseminated in the name of ideology, and the involuntary heroes that ideologies thrust upon innocents.

As the son of a military officer, Pelevin grew up among defenders of the faith, although he says "no one believed in the ideology". His father, who died this February, was a colonel in air defence, and Pelevin spent the summers of his childhood on a Moscow army base. "I really loved the place actually. It was like a big playground full of soldiers. Though you could mistake him for a squaddie, with his cropped hair and combat trousers, he didn't love

army life so much that he wanted to join up himself. To avoid military service, he enlisted at the age of 15 at the Moscow Institute of Power Engineering, and with the resultant qualifications found himself working on a project to protect Mig fighters from tropical insects. "We spent two or three months in so-called military camps playing cards and smoking dope. Sometimes they took you to an airfield where you would relax by lying on the wing of some fighter. I guess I killed a couple of insects one summer lying on the wing."

He took up writing in his mid-twenties – he is now 36 – because "I didn't want to go to work every morning. Literature is the kind of art where you're left absolutely on your own. If you grew up in a communist society it's normal that you get so many psychic traumas that it makes it hard for you to communicate

with other people. You have a lot of complexes. You are crippled by the time you are grown up. Writing helps you to cure yourself. It's like those long-distance runners who can't stop running because their bodies start to produce a drug. At first it's an effort and then it provides you with the shortest access to endorphins. You get high, start to laugh, and become very friendly to other people."

The Clay Machine-Gun was published three years ago, and yet there's no overlooking its relevance to the latest imbroglio in Yugoslavia, although Pelevin wouldn't dream of saying this back home. "The Serbs talk about this great Slavic brotherhood every time they are in trouble. In 1914 Russia got involved in war because of some killing in Sarajevo. After that Russia had a revolution and 70 years of communism. It was the direct result. I hope that the people in Russia are not total idiots. I hope that they remember some lessons. There's something really terrible about war in Europe – it sounds strange. But war has its own engine. You never know what will happen next." Spoken like a true Russian prophet.

'The Clay Machine-Gun', Faber and Faber and Harbord, £9.99. Victor Pelevin is appearing at the Brighton Festival on Saturday at 8pm in Pavilion Theatre, New Road

THE OPENING CHAPTER OF 'THE CLAY MACHINE-GUN'

TVRSK01 BOULEVARD was exactly as it had been when I last saw it, two years before. Once again it was February with snowdrifts everywhere and that peculiar gloom which somehow manages to infiltrate the very daylight. The same old women were perched motionless on the

benches; above them, beyond the black latticework of the branches, there was the same grey sky, like an old, worn mattress drooping down towards the earth under the weight of a sleeping god.

Some things, however, were different. This winter, the

avenues were scoured by a blizzard straight off the steppes, and I should not have been in the least surprised to have come face to face with a pair of wolves during the course of my walk. The bronze Pushkin seemed a little sadder than usual – no doubt because his breast was

covered with a red apron bearing the inscription "Long Live The First Anniversary Of The Revolution". I felt not the slightest inclination for ironical comment on the fact that the tears were intended for an event which could not by definition last longer than a single day...

No pause, no claws

HAROLD PINTER'S 1958 debut *The Birthday Party* is high up in the National Theatre survey of the century's great plays. Anyone coming cold to its latest revival, however, would be hard put to see why.

Two mysterious visitors, Goldberg and McCann, turn up at Meg and Petey's boarding house with malice aforethought, and terrorise Stanley, the paying guest. Yet, instead of pursuing a thriller format with everything neatly explained, Pinter leaves us in the dark as to the reasons for the malevolence and instead builds terrifyingly tense drama from the speech patterns and behaviour of his characters, tying a noose around the victim's neck, and that of the audience.

At least, that's the theory. But it's extremely difficult to pull off, and these actors have been cast adrift. Barry Jackson is a nicely benign Petey, but Prunella Scales plays Meg from a distance. She seems to have wandered in from Orson's *Entertaining Mr Sloane*, doing "comedy acting" with an accent borrowed from Irene Handl.

Steven Pacey as Stanley also stymies himself by using a nasal style that puts both us and him at one remove from his character. Part of the problem is the casting. He looks strong

THEATRE
THE BIRTHDAY PARTY
PICCADILLY THEATRE
LONDON



'The Birthday Party': disappointing revival
Geraint Lewis

enough to knock his interrogators flat, which unbalances the crucial power play.

Timothy West and a fiercely Irish Nigel Terry play Goldberg and McCann as a bizarre double act, but unless their banter is underpinned by a real sense of threat, the tension never builds. Here their actions appear merely baffling. At the opening of the second act, McCann sits methodically tearing a page of newspaper into strips.

In a strong production, the effect is chilling. The silent

scene may be abstract, but the feeling should engulf you like dry ice: something very, very nasty is going on. Here alas, the moment goes for nothing.

It's as if the director, Joe Harmston, has decided to banish the famous "pauses". Overly reverent, underpowered productions can make Pinter seem horribly portentous, but his pauses are there for solid, dramatic reasons. We should be glued to the dialogue's power of suggestion in the poetically constructed rhythms, but with Harmston's fleet-but-flat approach this three-act play whistles along without an interval in 100 minutes. The surface text is played so literally, so fast, that the actors race through the interrogation scenes as if doing a memory-testing speed-run.

Consequently, the all-important subtext remains dormant and we remain fatally disengaged. Scales manages a nice line in comic non-sequiturs but the humour should lighten the play's potentially thrilling undercurrents, which are rarely disturbed by Harmston's less than commanding grip.

DAVID BENEDICT

A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's newspaper

In your own time, Mr Pogorelich

CLASSICAL
IVO POGORELICH:
BENEFIT RECITAL
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

IVO POGORELICH has always been a controversial pianist, but to judge from his latest CD of Chopin's four Scherzos and the benefit recital he gave in aid of the historic sites of Vukovar, his eccentricity follows a certain pattern. His all-Chopin programme on Monday looked, on paper, your average two hours, without encores. It lasted at least 20 minutes longer.

One of Pogorelich's several gifts is a wonderfully focused sound. Launching the C minor Polonaise – if launching is the right word for the leisurely, wayward tempo he adopted – his left hand octaves sounded huge, as if he were pushing open the great bronze gates of a structure too immense to size up. Never mind that Chopin's score suggests something initially more understated – yet with more impetus, this was a strong, strange alternative view. The F sharp minor Polonaise, Op 44, began more conventionally, proud and pompous, though with the left hand overbalancing the right, until in the delicate contrasting section, Pogorelich's relish for the most refined and delicate sonorities threatened to bring progress to a halt. The piece

seemed to drag on for ever.

What might he do with the Funeral March Sonata? The opening motto was, again, enormously enlarged, though Pogorelich didn't include it in the repeat. The second subject was slowed down a lot, too, and rather heavy-handed, while the central development was distorted by having some bars virtually doubled in length. No wonder the whole movement seemed disjointed. The Scherzo – a real killer – went well, though again Pogorelich's left hand was too loud for his right. In the Trio section he made some ravishing sounds, while lingering on certain notes in a rather mysterious way.

And he took the Funeral March itself at a sensible tempo, though it got a bit slower as it wore on, and the central tune settled down at a slower pace that, unfortunately, suggested a rather boring walk. The celebrated fourth

movement was a mysterious blur – most people would probably agree that it is a mysterious movement – without any accents added (which pianists often apply) but continuous rumble from the right pedal.

After the interval, in the three Op 59 Mazurkas, Pogorelich took every opportunity to show off his beautifully varied touch and feeling for independent strands within textures. But it was very hard to follow a line through these pieces, or even make sense of their rhythms. The effect was distinctly quizzical.

By now the pattern of Pogorelich's pendulum-like nature was clear. And so it was in the Third Sonata, with the more relaxed passages of the opening movement bell-like and lingering, the middle section of the Scherzo so stretched out one sometimes wondered when the next note was coming, and the third movement excruciatingly slow. And yet the main part of the Scherzo was deliciously fluent and light and, in the finale, Pogorelich at last found the sense of continuity and purpose which had eluded him for most of the evening.

ADRIAN JACK

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There's no place like home

David Greig isn't just a 'Scottish' writer: his plays are produced across Europe. What does being a Scot mean to him? By Paul Taylor

Sean Connery has touched down north of the Border and so have I. Global screen superstar, Scotland's biggest export next to whisky, and her most prominent tax exile, ranged on one side of the case: a humble English theatre critic on the other. Surely no connection. Ah, but wait a moment. Connery is here - using up a few of the precious days allowed him per year by the Inland Revenue - to deliver what turns out to be an emotional, self-scripted election rally speech in support of the Scottish National Party. I mean, while, am here to talk about the cultural Zeitgeist with David Greig, the playwright who is, by general consent, the most gifted and prolific of the vibrant new wave of Scottish dramatists that includes David Knives in Hens Harrower and Stephen Posing Places Greenhorn.

Now it just so happens that Connery was the comically dominating offstage presence in Greig's *Caledonia Dreaming*, a 1997 play that put pre-devolutionary Scotland on the psychiatrist's couch by following a collection of characters as they chased around the place on a summer night when Connery is rumoured to be in residence at Edinburgh's top hotel. Cut to April 1999, and an amused Greig admits that Connery could no longer function in that play as a unifying, fantasy-figured icon of Scottish success.

The local press have turned hostile towards him (sniping at such anomalies as a great Patriot accepting an officer to promote Sun-tory Crest, a Japanese blended whisky), and the Kosovo crisis could not have come at a worse time, electorally speaking, for a Nationalist party. So who would he replace him with, if the play were given a revival? Greig thinks for a moment and replies, with typically playful humour, "Irvine Welsh".

Chatting to this softly-spoken young playwright, in the lounge bar of an anonymous hotel in a Glasgow railway complex, is a bit like conducting an interview with Samuel Beckett in a row of dustbins. Transit areas, borders, stop-off points that are neither one place nor the other, and cultural no-mans-lands, are Greig's principal imaginative terrain. This is the case in a text-based play like *Europe* (1994), which projects his preoccupation with Scottishness on to a redundant railway station in a decaying, unnamed central European town that has, historically, suffered all the indignities and identity crises of being a mere border between rival powers.

It's also true of the pieces he makes using the collaborative working methods of his own company, Suspect Culture, where text tends to be the last element added to an experience that lays as much emphasis on the eloquence of stylised gesture and musical form. *Airport* for example, was a droll and touching search for the "Real Scotland or the real anywhere" in the vast, limbo-like transit lounge that is the modern airport and employed a mixed nation-

ality cast. Cultural cusps are to Greig what thistles were to Hugh MacDiarmid, so, at this watershed in Scotland's identity, he's just the right man to quiz about how his generation of Scottish dramatists relate to their country's dramatic heritage, respond to the present and view their future.

One of the seven new pieces by Greig that will be premiered in 1999 is the haunting and snappily titled *The Cosmonaut's last message to the woman he once loved in the former Soviet Union*, which is just about to open in a Paines Plough touring production directed by Vicky Featherstone. Taking place both in outer space and in various European locations, it contains a scene in which a woman fantasises about re-treating to the Isle of Skye and learning Gaelic. "The children can go to school on the Internet," she remarks, blissfully unaware of any contradiction. The opposing forces (nationalism and globalisation) exemplified in her desires are reflected too, in Greig's response when I ask him which flag flies over his creative sub-conscious. He remarks that nationalism is both "irrational and very important". That's the paradox: "The more technology makes your nationality a meaningless thing, the more likely you are to cling to it. I effectively have more in common with a New York playwright on a similar income who watched the same television programmes in the 1970s, than I do with a fisherman in Sutherland." But, as globalisation goes into overdrive, "a simple gathering in a room is something people will increasingly want".

Which is where theatre comes into its own. But is this tantamount to suggesting that theatre and nationalism are parallel phenomena: both declared out-moded, yet being rediscovered as at once precious and dangerous? The latest vintage of Scottish playwright is distinguished by its looking to Europe both for audiences and for aesthetic influences. So would it not be slightly rum for such dramatists to lay any great stress on that parallel?

Philip Howard, the highly astute and, ironically, wholly English artistic director of Edinburgh's Traverse - a theatre where, during his tenure, the proportion of the repertoire devoted to Scottish playwrights has gone up from 30 to 90 per cent - remarks that a traditional source of vigour in the country's theatre and of differentiation from its English counterpart is that the dominant idiom has been working-class.

Greig, of whose work Howard is a key interpreter, is aware that his plays are regarded in certain quarters as the symptom of a creeping middle-class tendency and lack of that customary red-bloodedness. Certainly, it is hard to imagine Chris Hannan, a fine playwright from the preceding generation, composing a piece about a bunch of twentysomething urban Scots that involved a score for onstage string quartet which often deliberately drowned the dialogue, a Cubist arrangement of bodies, and lots of ritualised miming - as was the case with *Timeless*. But Greig good-hu-



Space oddity: Andy Smart in 'The Cosmonaut's last message to the woman he once loved in the former Soviet Union'

mouredly straddles the contradictions and ironies of being both "the most important playwright to have emerged north of the border in years" (*The Scotsman*) and an unrepentantly arty internationalist.

One of these ironies relates to Copenhagen about the creation of playwrighting cultures. I heard Greig's friend and fellow Glasgow-based dramatist Stephen Greenhorn vehemently deny that he was a British writer and effectively say that, in terms of his priorities, London could go fuck itself. Greig is more in two minds ("I don't think of London as the capital of Great Britain but as the capital of theatre") and points out that one of the ways

in which theatre remains nationalistic is in its funding. Understandably, he continues, neither the Scottish Arts Council nor the London Arts Board are prepared to finance the export of subsidised work to the English metropolis. This means that *Europe* has been seen in Europe but not in London, with the added irony that Europeans tend to take the title literally. "If I had my time again, I would call the play *Scotland*. That border town could just as easily be Motherwell." The catch 22 is that a playwright's native stock north of the Border rises considerably after appearances south of that line.

A source of money that by-passes these problems is the Edinburgh Festival, which has, for this year,

commissioned Greig and Luisa Cullis - a writer from the analogous polity of Catalonia - to compose pieces about emergent nations. Greig's response to the brief is highly revealing of his playfulness and capacity for lateral thinking. At the centre of *The Speculator* is John Law, the 18th-century Scot who invented paper currency and the notion of money as pure function. For 500 days in 1719, thanks to a financial scheme that eventually collapsed, Law ruled France more absolutely than any absolute monarch, and the play boasts the contention that if the staid hurgers of Edinburgh hadn't earlier drummed the father of paper inflation out of the country, it could have amassed

enough wealth to avoid the 1707 Act of Union. But *The Speculator* is not patriotic historical pageant, from Greig's description, it sounds more like an anachronism-flecked, post-modern meditation of the unbearable lightness of money.

As for the twinning with Catalonia, he thinks it works very much to Scotland's benefit. "I don't imagine there are hundreds of Catalonians milling around, saying how like Glasgow Barcelona is," he quips. I have no doubt that this self-deprecating humour is partly sincere; but it also, to my ear, sounds like an instance of the more relaxed cultural confidence that has generated this remarkable flowering of new Scottish dramaturgy.

WHAT THE MOVERS AND SHAKERS SAY



David Greig, dramatist
"Nationalism is both irrational and very important. That's the paradox. The more technology makes nationality a meaningless thing, the more likely you are to cling to it. I effectively have more in common with a New York playwright on a similar income who watched the same television programmes in the 1970s, than I do with a fisherman in Sutherland."



David MacLennan, Wild Cat Theatre Group
"There are many reasons to feel optimistic about devolution. It seems that devolution has come from a sense of cultural identity rather than political need. The driving force behind the change has been that Scotland has cultural differences and a sense of cultural traditions that needs to be strengthened."



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ROBERT HANKS ON TV

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ON THE FRINGE

ESCAPE FROM PTERODACTYL ISLAND THE PLEASANCE ■ GATE 45
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NATO HAS not yet incorporated the exploding coconut into its armoury, but in *Escape from Pterodactyl Island* this device proves effective against both barbarian and dinosaurs. Hardly surprising in a luminously absurd production that mixes eugenics, an eardrum-bursting score, a Nietzschean professor called Dr Devo, tongue-in-cheek choreography, Victorian prudery and fetishistic Lycra costumes.

Paul Thornley, as young Professor Worthington, is comically convincing as an English gentleman of the Wodehouse school, intent on carrying out DIY imperialism on the natives. The essence of his performance lies in a revved-up plummy accent and innocently raised eyebrows - both vital for escaping the Jurassic island where evil Dr Devo plans to create a reptilian super-race. Louisa McCarthy brings a bilious insouciance to her role as Eve, the babe in a fur bikini who wins the Prof's affections, while Sophie-Louise Dant's choreography equips all with *Rocky Horror*-inspired steps that are funny enough to get laughs when the script fails.

Philip George's production

is more cheesy than an aged bottle of milk - and some of the jokes are just as mouldy. When a mutant pterodactoid resulting from a Darwinian experiment tries to seduce Worthington with the lyrics "Feel the urge! Make the natural selection", you don't know whether to groan or die, but the balance is favourably tipped by Michael Jeffrey's score, which fills the audience with the kind of enthusiasm that crowd psychologists ought to investigate.

Alison Andrews' experimental Gate 45 also deals with escape, but this is a meditative piece in which two women muse on the experiences they could have if it were possible to evade the constraints of time. Alison Ashton's set design demands to be the star, featuring an airport luggage carousel that becomes a medium for exhibiting objects symbolising the memories, fantasies and journeys that the women create in their conversation.

Gate 45 comes across as an insipid exploration of material it doesn't quite know how to cope with. Like a parrying social climber, it frantically drops names to feign a credibility it doesn't possess. From a

conversation with Freud, we move on through a sequence of words and images embracing Hiroshima, Gandhi, Vietnam - oh, and Mickey Mouse. Strip it of its pretensions, and you are left with the women's dull musings. If you ever got the chance to time-travel, you wouldn't make this one of your stops.

Nor indeed would you stop off at Julia Pascal's *The Yiddish Queen Lear*. Pascal's decision to link the 20th-century persecution of the Jews with *King Lear* could have been an exciting and potent device - both raise the emotive issues of land possession, inheritance and exile - but this badly structured production ultimately comes across as a weak post-script to Shakespeare's masterpiece. The play occasionally comes alive when the cast performs Yiddish music hall - but when the star of the show is the pianist, you know that something is seriously wrong.

RACHEL HALLIBURTON

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POLLY MARKANDYA IS PA TO ANNE-MARIE HUBY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MÉDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES

From the age of 16, I had wanted to work for Médecins Sans Frontières. It was, and still is, an organisation that reflects the things I find important. MSF members always speak passionately, have guts and go to places others wouldn't, standing up for some of the most unlucky people on the planet. Whenever there is a big disaster there's always an MSF doctor at the scene.

I studied modern history, which was all about wars, disasters and population movement, so it wasn't a great leap to the field I am now working in.

After I graduated, I worked as an intern in Moscow for an organisation called Winrock, helping farmers through the transition from collective farming to private smallholdings. On my return, I wrote to 20 charities but got no positive replies, so I got a job with Marks & Spencer. Luckily I was saved from a lifetime of retail when MSF offered me a part-time voluntary job which I combined with two other jobs, until, six months later, I was given the full-time paid job of PA.

Anne-Marie and I shared a desk for several years, which was invaluable because I learnt so much from watching her and listening to her - her gut feeling is usually right and her advice excellent. Like many of my colleagues, she's a polyglot which makes me sick with jealousy - I would like to say I correct her English from time to time, but instead it's usually her correcting mine. She's supportive of me and pushed me to take on responsibilities and build my confidence.

Initially, I was doing anything from setting up board meetings to holding phone calls. Some calls are vital, others well-meaning if a little bizarre, such as the widow who rang because her husband had left his false leg to MSF in his will.

As time went on, I began taking more media enquiries and when Anne-Marie asked me what I most liked about my job at my annual review, I told her it was the press work - so she made me press assistant. I still work closely with her, for example when she was on *Question Time* and needed to be prepared. I spent an afternoon researching topics such as genetically modified foods and education.

Since we are an international organisation, we need to work closely with colleagues around the world, most of whom I've never



Polly Markandya: 'Constantly questioning what humanitarian action is keeps us close to our principles' *Kripesh Lathigra*

met, but I really like the relationships we build.

The situation in Kosovo is dominating everything, however, there are 30 other countries that receive our help. We are concerned about the failure to find a political settlement to the war in Sudan, for example, since there's a likelihood of it leading to another famine.

It's my job to brief volunteers beforehand and explain what their responsibility is vis-à-vis protecting the rights of the patient. A quarter of the countries we work in are within areas of conflict, and we feel strongly that it is the responsibility of each individual to provide a degree of protection for the patients as well as drawing their plight to the attention of the general public. We also believe that to protect people on the ground means being there, usually before the TV cameras and for some time after they have left.

The International Red Cross and MSF were the two organisations that

stayed longest in Pristina, which was partly due to the dedication of the people in the field. But as the bombing became more intensive and law and order began to break down - a precursor to the 'ethnic cleansing' - it became impossible to work amid anti-Western mob violence

lived my life and don't mind dying, but what about my six-year-old?

The calls from Sierra Leone were particularly bad as colleagues found adults and children who had been deliberately mutilated as part of a terror campaign. One feels sickened and horrified but at the same time

'MSF members have guts and go to places others wouldn't, standing up for some of the most unlucky people on the planet'

As the British communicator in England, I was on the phone to our volunteers a lot, and the calls were awful. Tim Boucher, our head of mission, was very worried about the local personnel. He reported how fearful the Albanians were.

One Kosovar member of staff, for example, told him: 'I'm 45 and I've

driven to work harder. The best motivating factor is when you are asked to spread the news to the wider world.

I love and believe in my work but I make a real effort not to bring it home with me - none of my friends works in the aid sector, which helps prevent me becoming totally

obsessed. You need to keep the perspective fresh, otherwise there is a danger of your becoming insensitive to the level of what is acceptable and what is not.

No one working here clock-watches: everyone puts in the hours, because they know the necessity of it. It is a very friendly office, we all have lunch together and there's a spirit of task-sharing. We do have an administrator but it's the job of everyone here to do their own typing and pick up the phone - we don't have voice mail. And when we had the office extended, everyone came in at the weekend to help out with the painting.

We are all listened to here, because each person has a different perspective, which ensures that there's a debate - and that's important because constantly questioning what humanitarian action is keeps us close to our principles.

INTERVIEW BY KATIE SAMPSON

Skinny, stupid and starving



THE TEMP

SOMETIMES YOU have to take stock, and Doug's e-mail, which compared my bum to two bowling balls in a rucksack, brought about one of those moments. Straining to see over my own shoulder into the mirror, I realise that though the comment might have been unnecessarily cruel, he had a point. I know that most of the world has their excuses for being overweight, but it really is difficult to watch your diet as a temp, when you don't have access to a corporate gym and meals often consist of a packet of crisps and a bottle of chocolate milk snatched from the station newsagent because you've no idea where the local food outlets are.

But yes, over a long winter when, like most office workers, I didn't see daylight at all except at weekends (jogging on a rainy night dodging muggers, tramps and Combat 18 members somehow fails to appeal), my backside has expanded, though I'd say it looks more like two footballs in a saddlebag. So there's nothing for it: I have to go on the secretarial starvation diet. It's all very well every publication in the country publishing neat little lists of menus to help you shed that reluctant stone, but only someone whose life is based around the home, who has absolutely regular hours or is totally obsessive can track down beetroot and cottage cheese on a bed of lettuce in the average high street.

It's worse for men, of course. I worked at a big engineering company a while ago that had a canteen. Every time one of the male employees ordered salad and fruit for lunch, all the other blokes would gang up and start putting a rumour about that he was gay, which would have him back on the pie-and-chips diet in no time at all. So if you're gay and you're out, at least you can eat what you want without repercussions. Which is probably why there are so many more good-looking gay men than heterosexuals.

Then again, the pressure on men to be thin is infinitely less. I get up 15 minutes early every morning now in order to wolf a bowl of fruit and fibre to get the old system moving and give me a fighting chance of surviving

until a lunch of cullings from the bag of bananas, grapefruit, pears, oranges, grapes, kiwis and apples that I bought in the supermarket on a speed-raid at the weekend. Sometimes in the evening I have beans on toast (no butter) for a treat. Those footballs are deflating nicely, but then, so is my brain power.

My typing is riddled with errors, I forget things if I don't write notes to myself, I find my mind drifting away in the middle of dictation BECAUSE I'M SO BLOODY HUNGRY. And aside from the acidic explosions in my stomach, the consumptive weakness, the constant short fuse, I can't actually think about anything other than food. Juicy steaks, buttery spuds, wild mushroom risotto with a generous sprinkling of Parmesan, chunky KitKats dance across my vision. I cry myself to sleep as my body begs for hot chocolate and a couple of biscuits.

Someone suggests going out for a pizza and I have to be restrained from throttling them. And this period of starvation, as I watch other women squeak in feeble voices and order mineral water in bars, has made something very clear to me about the gender wars. This is it: men claim to like us whippet-thin. Strange, though, that this taste for bones on a chick only kicked in around the time, in the 1920s, when we got the vote, started going to university, began, slowly, to creep into the workplace, isn't it? Maintaining the state of near-starvation required to look like Kate Moss when you've got the genetic heritage of Miriam Margolyes means that half the world's working women are only functioning at half-cock.

By allowing ourselves to be slaves to our insecurities, we stay skinny and stupid, and the boys get the promotions. Clever, eh? So clever, in fact, that it must have originally been thought up by a woman.

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How to talk your way out of a job as a secretary...

Will a regional accent hinder your career progress? By Kate Hilpern

LAST YEAR, you may remember, Tony Blair was ridiculed for his attempt to dress down his accent to adapt to a particular audience. And William Hague receives constant ridicule for his Yorkshire burr. Indeed, an accent speaks volumes about background and education and - fairly or unfairly - suggests a lot more besides.

For secretarial staff, who are expected to reflect the image of the company for which they work, the implications of this are enormous - a fact that Jean Briscoe knows all too well. Five years ago, she claims, she was sacked from her telephone receptionist job because her boss didn't like her heavy Birmingham accent. Brummies, after all, are all too often regarded as unintelligent and working-class. Similarly, Louise Yates, the wife of the footballer Steve Yates, claims she was forced to quit three jobs because of constant ribbing of her West Country accent. Some colleagues called her a "yobel" while others even slowed down or spoke more loudly when talking to her. Research by the Institute of Personnel and Development - based on a survey of 30 recruitment consultants - finds that BBC English still remains the accent that opens the most doors. One consultant, Rachel Asquith, explains: "The person answering the phone or greeting clients is often the first point of contact. Just as employers wouldn't employ someone to do that who doesn't dress how they like, most won't consider someone who doesn't sound how they like. Unfortunately, that often means people with a strong regional or working-class accent don't get a look-in." Even if they get the job, they may never be promoted.

"Employers may think it doesn't matter how you sound if you're PA to a manager, but being PA to the chief executive is a different matter. They think, 'We've spent all this money on corporate logos and posh offices, so we're not going to ruin our image now.' It can make it almost impossible to get a fair chance."

According to Paul Coggle, senior lecturer in modern lan-

guage at the University of Kent, however, such attitudes are relaxing - if only in particular industries. After all, he says, accents do go in and out of fashion. Indeed, you'd be hard pushed to find many young people with the clipped upper-class accent of the Forties (think Brian Sewell). Instead, estuary English (think Jonathan Ross) is becoming popular as Britain becomes less class-conscious. "This can be seen particularly clearly within the medical establishment, law and banks," says Coggle. "In the City, cockney is even becoming quite preva-

lent." But PR, publishing and much of the media, he says, are still favouring BBC English. Surprisingly, perhaps, foreign accents are popular. "Provided you can be understood clearly, you may even get preferential treatment if you're Continental," says Ashley Mitchell, a careers adviser. "Italian and French women are often seen to portray an 'exotic' image as secretaries."



Kirsty Wark: her Scottish vowels work well for her

Nevertheless, she claims, regional accents can work in your favour. "For the past three or so years, Mancunian has been considered trendy, while the Scottish accent is considered 'honest.' Mind you, I'd say you've got the best chance of making your accent work for you if you work in the locality."

One Edinburgh recruitment consultant remarks that upper-class BBC English in Scotland, "positively incites hostility". Katie Saunders, a PA for an advertising firm, agrees. "I've got a strong Scouse accent and worked in Liverpool for 11 years as a secretary with no

problems at all. But as soon as I moved to London five years ago, I found my accent mattered. In one interview, I was told outright that I sounded too 'whiny'."

The result? She went for elocution lessons. "I didn't want to lose my accent altogether... my friends and family would be horrified," she says. "But I decided to attempt to soften it a bit." It wasn't easy, however, taking almost a year of weekly, hour-long sessions to get the sound she was after. "But it worked a treat in the end."

However, she found that the way you speak is about much more than accent. "I realised I spoke too quickly and often didn't finish the end of my sentences," she explains. "That made me sound girly and chaotic, irrespective of my regional accent."

Shallow breathing is also a common problem, making women sound young and unprofessional, adds Madeleine Cannon, principal coach at Professional Voice in London. Others don't realise how dull they sound, speaking in a monotone, while an increasing number of women have fallen into a habit of lifting the voice at the end of a sentence. "This may give a relaxed, Australian feel... but it also seems to suggest it has no value," she says.

The good news, according to Coggle, is that younger generations tend to be accent chameleons - rather like Tony Blair. That means they'll use BBC English, say, for an interview, while subconsciously downgrading or changing their tone when talking to friends. What this means for the future is that accents will become less pronounced and, consequently, less likely to be judged.



THE INFORMATION DAILY

CINEMA · THEATRE · EXHIBITIONS · MUSIC · DANCE · LITERATURE · COMEDY · EVENTS · TV & RADIO

NEW FILMS

BESIEGED (PG, 92 mins)
Director: Bernardo Bertolucci
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

THE BRYLCREEM BOYS (13, 106 mins)
Director: Terence Ryan
Starring: Gaius Byrne, Bill Campbell
Neutral Ireland during WWII. Captured German and Allied soldiers are shoehorned into the same cells. Tensions erupt: stereotypes are paraded; uneasy allegiances form. Ryan's film may have worked well on stage. Here, it looks flat and horribly schematic. **West End:** ABC Pantons Street.

DANCE WITH ME (PG, 126 mins)
Director: Randa Haines
Starring: Chayanne, Vanessa L. Williams
Building to a predictable finale at the World Dance Championships, the clanking *Dance With Me* has its Cuban emigre hero (Chayanne) alighting in the US of A to hunt for his long-lost pop (Kris Kristofferson), while still finding time to romance Vanessa L. Williams's ballroom beauty. **West End:** Virgin Trocadero. **And local cinemas**

BMM (18, 123 mins)
Director: Joel Shumacher
Starring: Nicolas Cage, Joaquin Phoenix
The dead band of Hollywood politics is evident all over this would-be provocative trip through LA's porn hinterland. Nicolas Cage copes well as the private eye hired to validate what looks to be south movie footage, but such souz requires careful handling, and Schumacher lets it take over. Frustratingly, *Bmm* winds up contaminated by that which it is nominally investigating. **West End:** Clapham

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE (12, 132 mins)
Director: Luis Mandoki
Starring: Kevin Costner, Robin Wright Penn
Kevin Costner's South Carolina boat-builder writes a love letter to his dead missus. Letter goes into bottle, bottle into sea. Lonesome lady (Robin Wright Penn) finds bottle. Complete the plot in less than 50 words. We all know where this one's headed, don't we? True love, pain of the past, a dash of redemption, and that's it, you're done. **West End:** ABC Tottenham Court Road, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. **And local cinemas**

THE MISADVENTURES OF MARGARET (15, 100 mins)
Director: Brian Skeet
Starring: Parker Posey, Jeremy Northam
Parker Posey is Margaret, a kind of Pelelope Pitstop of romantic fiction. She touches down in Paris, weds Jeremy Northam's dippy Englishman, and writes an effervescent book or two in New York. Brian Skeet's film follows a screwball rhythm, over-egging the farce, tossing in bodice-ripping dramatisations and, crucially, leaving the characters under-drawn. The normally luminous Posey displays a series of self-conscious ticks and twitches. **West End:** ABC Shaftesbury Avenue

SIDE STREETS (15, 131 mins)
Director: Tony Gerber
Starring: Shashi Kapoor, Valeria Golino
A kind of *Short Cuts* without the cut. *Side Streets* rustles up a quintet of stories from New York. Cue lively vignettes and proficient playing from a multi-national cast. The whole tapestry of New York life is dry-cleaned, lightly embroidered and unrolled for your pleasure. **West End:** Plaza, Local: Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

Gods and Monsters (15)
A droll speculation on the last days of 1930s horror auteur James Whale (Ian McKellen), who is hypnotised by the alluring form of his Beverly Hills gardener (Brundan Fraser). Director Bill Condon won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay.

Happiness (18)
Set in New Jersey, Todd Solondz's second film (right) is a dark comedy of loneliness and sexual deviancy that reaffirms this young writer-director's talent.

The Faculty (15)
Kevin Williamson does it again with this sci-fi tale of alien invaders. Beautiful people, a sharp script, subversive morals, Piper Laurie. Why can't all teen films be like this?

High Art (18)
A portrait of the artist as fashion screw-up, Lisa Cholodenko's bitterly witty take on New York living (and dying) boasts one of the performances of the year from Ally Sheedy.

Shakespeare in Love (15)
This enjoyable, Oscar-laden historical romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow (Best Actress) head an impressive cast.

ANTHONY QUINN AND CHARLOTTE O'SULLIVAN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

Good (Donmar Warehouse, London)
Starring Charles Dance, CP Taylor's play about accommodations with conscience is revived in a sensitive production by Michael Grandage. To 22 May

Making Noise Quietly (Whitehall Theatre, London)
Very welcome West End run for Deborah Bruce's lovely poetic revival of Robert Holman's sensitive triptych about the emotional effects of war. To 22 May

Mamma Mia! (Prince Edward Theatre, London)
Designed to bring out the dancing Queen in the straightest soul, this silly, enjoyable compilation musical (right) finds flagrant plot excuses for 27 Abba golden oldies. *Booking to 11 Sept*

Volpone (Swan Theatre, Stratford)
Comedies don't come any funnier or more astringent than Ben Jonson's brilliant dissection of avaricious, over-reaching egotism. To 9 Oct

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford)
In Michael Boyd's beguiling staging, Josette Simoes' Amazonian Titania is sex-on-a-very-long-legs and could devour Tins Turner for breakfast. To 9 Oct

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Jackson Pollock (Tate Gallery)
Big, revelatory retrospective for the hero of Abstract Expressionism (going on Old Master), legendary for his great drip paintings (right), but virtually unknown here for 40 years. To 6 Jun

Thinking Aloud (Camden Arts Centre)
Sculptor Richard Wentworth curates this curious and cheering exploration of creativity in art and life an assortment of rough drafts and try-outs. To 30 May

Andreas Gursky (Dean Gallery, Edinburgh)
Photographs 1994-98: huge, high-finish, micro-detailed, digitally manipulated images of our world - stock-exchange floor, cityscape, hotel foyer. Vistas of more than the eye can see. To 16 May

Antony Gormley's 'Field' (Firstsite at Roman House, Colchester)
One of the great hits of the decade: a sea of 40,000 pint-sized clay men - obedient, expectant, menacing, and stopping dead in a line at your feet. To 23 May

ESP (IKON Gallery, Birmingham)
Contemporary artists investigate the paranormal in this weird group show, including Susan Hill's frightening and wonderful video installation about the psychic powers of children. To 13 Jun

TOM LUBBOCK

GENERAL RELEASE

AMERICAN HISTORY X (18, 119 mins)
A liberal essay on right-wing fanaticism, *American History X* nonetheless indulges in some dubious Nazi chic. What binds it together is a genuine tour-de-force from Oscar-nominated Edward Norton. **West End:** Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Warner West End. **And local cinemas**

ARLINGTON ROAD (15, 117 mins)
Mark Pellington's intriguingly staged paranoia thriller, sees Jeff Bridges' college prof becoming suspicious about the antics of his outwardly respectable neighbour (Tim Robbins). **West End:** Warner Village West End

AN AUTUMN TALE (U, 111 mins)
The final part of Eric Rohmer's *Tales of the Four Seasons* is airily elegant and as warm as sunshine. Magali (Beatrice Romand) - middle-aged and single - gets ushered through all manner of boops as her friends try to set her up with eligible men. **West End:** Curzon Minerva, Renoir. **Repertory:** Watermans Arts Centre

BEDROOMS AND HALLWAYS (15, 96 mins)
In this latest offering from *The Life School* of British film-making, Kevin McKidd's giddy Londoner runs the romantic gauntlet in the run-up to his 30th birthday. **West End:** ABC Piccadilly

BLAST FROM THE PAST (12, 111 mins)
Hugh Wilson's workmanlike Cold War satire has Brendan Fraser's last American man (called Adam, natch) emerging from the nuclear bunker that his parents holed up in during the Cuban Missile Crisis. With Alicia Silverstone. **West End:** Warner Village West End

A CIVIL ACTION (15, 113 mins)
John Travolta's ambulance-chasing lawyer takes a shot at redemption in this complex and absorbing courtroom saga which nonetheless raises inevitable comparisons with *Sidney Lumet's The Verdict*. **West End:** Empire Leicester Square, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero. **And local cinemas**

THE FACULTY (15, 104 mins)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above. **West End:** Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. **And local cinemas**

FESTEN (THE CELEBRATION) (15, 106 mins)
Filmed using natural light, natural sound and a hand-held camera, *Festen* begins in a rush of pure, unfettered drama. The film's rawness is largely contrived, but by the end you're too hooked to care. **West End:** ABC Pantons St, Odeon Swiss Cottage. **Repertory:** Watermans Arts Centre

GODS AND MONSTERS (15, 105 mins)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above. **West End:** ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Metro, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road. **And local cinemas**

HAPPINESS (18, 134 mins)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Renoir, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, Screen on the Hill, Virgin Haymarket

HIGH ART (18, 102 mins)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above. **West End:** Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema

AN IDEAL HUSBAND (PG, 100 mins)
Oliver Parker's film is a proficient but mechanical overhaul of Oscar Wilde's satire of middle-class hypocrisies. The sharp dialogue is rather blurred by the snappy editing but bright playing from the cast (Rupert Everett, Cate Blanchett) helps paper over the cracks. **West End:** ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Chelsea Cinema, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, The Tricycle Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. **And local cinemas**

PAYBACK (18, 110 mins)
Revisiting the same source ovel that inspired John Boorman's *Point Blank*, this run-of-the-mill revenge thriller sends its anti-hero (Mel Gibson) on a mission to get his money and get even. **West End:** Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. **And local cinemas**

PLUNKETT AND MACLEANE (15, 100 mins)
Robert Carlyle, Jonny Lee Miller and Liv Ullmann star in this 18th-century romp that offers noise and pop-music visuals rather than character development. **West End:** Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Mezzanine, Ritzy Cinema. **And local cinemas**

THE RED VIOLIN (15, 132 mins)
François Girard's daisy chain of historical vignettes follows the course of a cursed violin down the centuries. Unfortunately, Girard's bitty narrative leaves the film labouring in third gear throughout. **West End:** Odeon Mezzanine

RETURN TO PARADISE (15, 109 mins)
In Joseph Ruben's fact-based saga, two graduate travellers return to the scene of their crimes when a buddy is hauled for drugs possession in Malaysia. A classic 'what would you do if?' morality play; the film still hedges its ready-made drama. **West End:** Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. **And local cinemas**

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15, 123 mins)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above. **West End:** Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero. **And local cinemas**

SLAM (15, 99 mins)
Even if slam-poetry's clanking rhymes make you want to 'slam' the perpetrator's head in a car door, Marc Levin's drama still carries emotional force. **West End:** Ritzy Cinema

TEA WITH MUSSOLINI (PG, 117 mins)
Franco Zeffirelli's *Tea with Mussolini* ambles around the houses telling its tale of doctry Brits (including Maggie Smith, Judi Dench) adrift in Mussolini-era Tuscany. **West End:** Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, UCI Whiteleys. **And local cinemas**

THE THIN RED LINE (15, 170 mins)
Terrence Malick's long-awaited return to the director's chair results in a fabulous, fever-struck war film. While a cast of familiar faces vie for attention, all play a determined second fiddle to the film's creeping narcotic mood. **West End:** Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Haymarket

WAKING NED (PG, 91 mins)
A rattle-bag of comedic misadventure as two Irish scalliwags scheme to get their paws on some lottery loot. **West End:** Odeon West End. **And local cinemas**

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC PANTONS STREET (PG, 92 mins) @ Piccadilly Circus
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ABC PICCADILLY (PG, 92 mins) @ Piccadilly Circus
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVE (PG, 92 mins) @ Shaftesbury Avenue
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ABC SWISS COTTAGE (PG, 92 mins) @ Swiss Cottage
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ABC TOTENHAM CT RD (PG, 92 mins) @ Tottenham Court Road
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

BARBICAN SCREEN (PG, 92 mins) @ Barbican Screen
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

CHELSEA CINEMA (PG, 92 mins) @ Chelsea Cinema
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE (PG, 92 mins) @ Clapham Picture House
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

CURZON MAYFAIR (PG, 92 mins) @ Curzon Mayfair
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

CURZON MINERVA (PG, 92 mins) @ Curzon Minerva
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

CURZON SOHO (PG, 92 mins) @ Curzon Soho
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQ (PG, 92 mins) @ Empire Leicester Square
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

GATE NOTTING HILL (PG, 92 mins) @ Gate Notting Hill
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

METRO (PG, 92 mins) @ Metro
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

NOTTING HILL CORONET (PG, 92 mins) @ Notting Hill Coronet
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Camden Town
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON HAYMARKET (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Haymarket
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON KENSINGTON (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Kensington
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON MARBLE ARCH (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Marble Arch
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Swiss Cottage
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Tottenham Court Road
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON VICTORIA (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Victoria
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON WHITELEYS (PG, 92 mins) @ Odeon Whiteleys
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

ODEON MEZZANINE

(PG, 92 mins) @ Mezzanine
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
In a startling volte-face from the epics of recent years, Bertolucci's new film, *Besieged*, confines itself principally to a cavernous Roman townhouse. It charts the festering master-servant relationship between Thewlis's highly strung concert pianist and Newton's refugee housemaid, all torrid glances and stuttering moments of communication. At once small-scale and ripely melodramatic, this is a mixed bag, but with a beautifully understated finale. **West End:** Clapham Picture House, Curzon Mayfair. **Repertory:** The Pullman Everyman.

(PG, 92 mins) @ Mezzanine
Starring: Thandie Newton, David Thewlis
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WEDNESDAY TELEVISION

THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW
The Independent 28 April 1991



**ROBERT
HANKS**



TELEVISION REVIEW

WOMEN, while by and large frantic about things with a certain measure that leaves no doubt, can hardly begin to understand how often many men are by the alien of buying clothes. If you decide that, just look at the way the experience is portrayed in *Lesbians*.

The narrow scripters with sexual humiliation that customers were forced to undergo by the staff of (Harris) Brothers in *My Darling Seniors*, or the twin years in *This Place Goes*. These humiliations may be exaggerated, but they aren't created from nothing, in some degree, or at least some men, that really is what buying in men feels like.

could tell whether you were wearing a suit for the first time, and everybody would comment on it.

"There was a presidential inquest about all this," perhaps Adam and Eve had covered up their nakedness with heavy-duty cloth, worsted. I wouldn't have minded so much.

But however the Sticks, and the serpent, fashion entered this Eden, suits blossomed into elegant trousers, given birth to the crutch and floppy in the neck, and men began using hair, confabulate.

In towns, as far west as Nevada, I've heard it - men had to invent suits to protect them, for men were so powerful, they had to believe it. Inherently, from the constraints of the old-fashioned suit, large numbers of men if I am myself still wearing it to use clothes as a way of fitting into the background, an obligation, an expression of the mostly contrived that appearances are provided it's what's underneath that counts. *Ready to wear* looks easily, but up close, it was distinctly inhereant.

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and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

BBC1

[illegible]

BBOZ

2.00 **Champion's Secret** (Hollywood) (V) (PG-13, 75-00) Top Cat (S) (65/27/45), 7.65 Trading Places - French (Exchange) (S) (1) (68/27/38), 8.50 Dielectric and 8.50 (S) (68/30/35), 8.40 Poles Out Shorts (30/54/28), 8.50 Pigu (S) (30/53/32), 8.00 The Geography Programme (4/66/57), 8.10 Numberline (43/68/33), 8.25 Poké Dance (04/07/05), 8.15 Wind and Numbers (79/51/57), 10.00 Jeopardies (7/17), 10.30 Playtime (35/50/48), 10.44 Can Eva (28/38/19), 11.05 Numdome (Adrenalin) (4/47/42), 11.20 The Geography Programme (47/47/42), 11.40 Science in Action (24/72/33), 12.00 Singsongtime the Animated Films (S) (25/50/0), 12.30 Working Lunch (33/30), 11.00 Urban (33/37/15/7).

1.00 World Snooker and Racing. Chantix and racing. Sheffield and the 250pp race from Ascot (12/24/27).

2.45 News Weather (1) 10/15/23/29 2.50 Weatherman (S) (11/10/14), 3.55 News, 1 Unit News, Weather (11/10/17/21/27/29).

4.00 World Snooker and Racing. The Open from Asen in the final (S) (P) (14/15/21).

5.50 Lullalino. On March of relief, the national identity for each, numbers and numbers numbers (S) (10/15/21/27).

8.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. And in space, the conflict with alien but intergalactic threat was alien and the extremely mysterious matter (1) (S) (1) (10/15/21).

0.45 World Snooker Championship. Larnham's example of both aspects which in the Larnham world Championship, with a total Van (S) (10/15/21).

ITV Carlton

9.25 Thea (S) (7) (345975) 10.30 The Morning (7) (18729393) 12.20 You Shoul (3944723) 12.55 London Lunchtime News: Weather (7) (225457) 12.55 London (7) (22593646) 1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (S) today (7) (405894) 2.10 Home and Away (7) (39478555) 2.40 Wheel of Fortune (S) (7) (267379).

3.40 ITV News Headlines (7) (335863).

3.20 Children's ITV: Moby (537054) 3.25 The Story (S) today (7) (393210) 3.40 Armist (4) (S) (7) (213144) 4.05 The Arnold (7) (S) (7) (767296) 4.30 Wilfred (1) (713155) 5.00 I Home and Away (S) (7) (19154)

5.30 Mind the Gap: I've been there: I promise! Theme in colour, background: Stillwater. It seems, to each (from regular independent contributors) (C9).

5.00 London Tonight (7) (122472).

6.25 Party Election Broadcast by the Liberal Democrats (7) (141610).

6.30 ITV Evening News: Weather (7) (1913).

7.00 Emmerdale: Bill and Chris come to blows over Kate (C9-70)

Channel 4

16.00 *Schools! The English Programme* (3x18), **9.30** *Rat-tail* (7x49/72), **9.45** *Book Box* (7x195), **10.00** *Stage Two Science* (1x187), **10.15** *Ali* (5x15), **10.45** *Planet Earth* (1x182), **10.50** *The Number Crew* (3x50/40), **10.40** *Pitch Fever* (9x47/70), **11.00** *First Edition* (7x94/57/7), **11.15** *The X File* (6x48/32).

11.30 *Powerhouse* (6x51), **12.00** *Seems Strang* (8) (7) (50/5), **12.30** *Football* (7x88), **1.00** *Caroline in the Cars* (1x42/8), **1.30** *Little Games* (5x57/70), **1.45** *Earthscope* (1) (5x53/83/5).

1.55 *Europa The Pied Piper* (living Pichel 1942 US). *Contemporary adaptation of Neil Shustler novel about an alien's metropolis (Woody Woolley cast to type, it is not the correct nationality) who reluctantly secures two children back to dignity in the teeth of the Ne-z invasion of France. With Anne Baxter as a helpful French woman and Roddy McDowall as one of the brats* (2x187/70).

2.30 *Collectors' Lot* (40/9), **4.00** *Filmen to One* (7) (9/6), **4.30** *Conundrum* (7) (72/88/8), **4.45** *Rat Lika* (7) (88/51/9), **5.30** *Pei Rascue* (1) (4/80).

8.00 *Dawson's Creek*. *Boatman Dreamings*. *Dawson wishes the prize for his short film, (1945/70), and asks to help Percy with his kick of self-esteem* (7) (1945/70).

Channel 5

1.50 Mommilin and Wife. From 1973, and Brock Hudson's married health attends a college reunion (#54406428).

3.40 FELIX The Third Day (Jack Smith 1965 US). Largely forgotten amnesia thriller starring George Peppard and he then wife, Elizabeth Ashley. Our man is pulled from a car crash, but can't remember the events leading up to the burn (#4328515).

5.50 5 News (S) (#56594059).

5.50 100 Par Cent (S) (#591052).

6.00 5 News Including First on Five. Kirsty Young tries off with the day's top stories (S) (T) (#561225).

6.30 Family Affairs. Pam, sleazy on her tranquillisers, is worried about her sanity when her underclass arrives at the house to 'collect' her body (S) (T) (#600577).

7.00 Police Squad. Spood police series from the creators of *Alphie* and *The Mind* (#252491).

COMEDY OF THE DAY

1035 To Be Annointed, Following the Lead of Jai Danto
The advertised edition of *Cornerhead: Film* has been rescheduled. At the time of going to press, the publication programme had not been announced (81 172616).

11400 The Killing of Kosovo, June Corbin presents this
Favourite special looking at how Serbian Milosevic planned the 'ethnic cleansing' of Kosovo and discusses the chances of Moscovici being brought to justice.
(890267)

11401 Film 89 with Jonathan Ross (S) (7) (67782)

1240 Film The Devil Be Bad (Sam Piskary 1990 US)
Nicola Sheridan is torn between her gentle yet ironclad mother and the brutal brother (Tim Weir) (166037).

145 John 8BC News 24 (662350A). To Gairt

MUSIC PROGRAMME OF THE DAY

10.30 Party Election Broadcast by the Liberal Democrats (S) (8624901)

10.35 Newsnight. With Jeremy Paxman (1) (650407).

11.20 BIG Anne-Sophie Mutter: My Year with Dostoevsky. The pianist waltzes solo, at a world-famous St. Mark's *Programme of the Day*. (BBC2) (2592726)

12.00 Dorelatch Box (S) (40760) **12.30 1 post University** Small Services (862823, 100) **Midnight and Morning** (404742) **3.30** Symposium at Park (652342) **2.00** School of Life (6504) **4.00** Languages, What French You Business (6504) **5.00** Bedrooms and Housing Web Wins (652342) **5.45** Open University: The Education and Global Relationships (652342) (to catch

FILM OF THE DAY

10.30 Eurotrash. A 90-year-old German drag queen, Miss Sweden 1993, and a television idea that has run like course (R) (S) (T) (20/75).

11.00 The 11 O'Clock Show (T) (1208).

11.30 Jo Whalley (T) (463/20). 12.50 Football league—Manchester (463/145). **2.45** International Sport (658/697). **3.45** Electric Avenue (R) (728/10).

4.45 FIDELIA **Frida** (David Duchen, 1947, UK), interesting historically, less so dramatically, this post-WWII drama sees Mal Zaitling as a young German woman who is brought home to dignity at war and by R4-critic Dr. Fennel. Cue emotional hostility and a subliminal prologue. (Glynis Johns as Fennel; cut line (464/72).) (S) (5558).

Monday

10.50 Football: Barcelona vs Brazil - Highlights.
Brazil play Barcelona in their ongoing tour of Europe and soccer-fixture Channel 5 are there to pick up the pieces (4015003).

11.30 UK Raw (4501664).

12.00 Major League Baseball (8012623) **4.30 Australian Rules Football** (5) (3885656). **5.30 100 Per Cent** (1) (5) (6232691). To dem.

THE EVISION GUIDE BY GREGORY CHAMBER